HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 11, 1975

The SPEAKER (Hon. J. R. Ryan) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITION: UNLEY TRAFFIC

Mr. MILLHOUSE presented a petition signed by 328 residents of Unley stating that traffic prohibition regulations made under the Road Traffic Act were causing concern, particularly to residents of Wattle Street, because of the increased traffic, pollution, and hazards for residents, and praying that the House of Assembly would support the motion for disallowance of the regulations, notice of which was given by the member for Mitcham on February 19.

Petition received.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): I inform the House that I have distributed to members the list of business to be undertaken by the House this week. I take this opportunity to thank the Opposition for the courtesy and co-operation it showed last week in relation to the business of the House.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following written answers to questions be distributed and printed in *Hansard.*

WAGE CLAIMS

In reply to Mr. MILLHOUSE (February 20).

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Cabinet has authorised the Public Service Board to instruct departments to observe awards and industrial agreements that bind the Public Service Board or the South Australian Government. The board instructs departments to observe the new award giving effect to increased rates and/or improved conditions as soon as the new award is published in the *Government Gazette.* If retrospectivity is involved, the board seeks approval of the Minister of Labour and Industry. Delays have occurred in the payment of award increases primarily because of two factors:

1. Administrative and personnel problems in the Industrial Commission resulting in delays in the publication of awards.
2. The large increase in numbers of variations to awards that have to be processed by departmental pay offices.

Action to eliminate the first of these delays has been taken by the Minister of Labour and Industry, who, ini January, established a working party to examine delays that are. occurring in the Industrial Commission. The working party under the chairmanship of the Industrial Registrar will consist of representatives of employees and representatives of employers. In relation to the second reason for delays, the board is aware that departments have authorised a substantial amount of overtime for pay clerks in an endeavour to speed up payment. However, it must be remembered there are many awards binding the board or the Government that are being varied in relation to wages and working conditions more frequently, with less intervals of time between such variations.

At times the Australian Government Workers Association itself has contributed to the delays. As an example affecting female employees in hospitals, the union was aware for some months that the final instalment for equal pay was due from February 1, 1975. Notwithstanding this, the association lodged its claim only on February 7, 1975. I have accepted the assurance of the Public Service Board that efforts are being made to minimise the delays that have been occurring.

UNDERGROUND WATER

In reply to Mr. RODDA (February 27).

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Knowledge of the underground waters of the South-East is being increased with additional information gathered from existing wells and new wells drilled under permit. The controls to date have also ensured that no new sources of contamination of aquifers occur. The actions implemented so far, together with the excellent co-operation of the landholders of the Padthaway area, have had the effect of discouraging any increased use of underground water in that area. This has ensured a static situation while investigations and studies to determine the extent of the problem have been concluded. I expect a report on these studies from the Underground Waters Advisory Committee within the next few weeks.

CHAFFEY PUMPING STATION

In reply to Mr. ARNOLD (March 4).

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The repair of the flood damage to the sheet pile cut-off and the floor of the new Chaffey pumping station could not be done concurrently with pumping operations from this station because of the high risk of damage to the pumps and the danger to the personnel undertaking the repair work if the pumps were running. To enable one pump to be operated during the period of very high salinity, a heavy steel plate was placed over the collapsed portion of the floor and the pump was started on February 23. On February 24 the Irrigation Advisory Board decided that, because of excess salinity, the irrigation would be stopped for a week or until the salinity went below 1 400 electrical conductivity units, whichever was the sooner. The repairs were considered to be very urgent and, immediately the new pump was stopped, arrangements were made to commence filling the hole under the station. This has now been done, the concrete floor reinstated, and the sheet piling repaired. I have been told that both pumps came into operation on Monday afternoon.

SEWERAGE PROJECTS

In reply to Mr. EVANS (March 4).

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The actual expenditure from Loan funds, either from State Government or Australian Government contributions, is $11 000 000. In addition, about $2 000 000 will be obtained from subdividers to carry out construction of sewers in their subdivisions. The State Government has not decreased its contribution to sewerage projects in this State because of the increase in allocation made by the Australian Government. With regard to the Mitcham Hills area, the sewer allotment quoted as 3 500 should have been 1 920, and in the Morphett Vale and Christies Beach area the sewer allotments quoted as 6 500 should have been 3 800. When calculated, the contribution by the Australian Government for an allotment is about the same.

SCHOOL ASSISTANCE

In reply to Mr. ARNOLD (February 20).

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: For schools classed as priority project schools, the Schools Commission has made money available in capital and recurrent categories. For primary schools, the capital funds have very largely been expended. In the recurrent area, $1 054 000 was made available for primary schools for the two years 1974-75. The amount approved for each priority project school varies according to size. Each school is encouraged to suggest a

special programme. The aim of the programme is to improve pupil learning outcomes and self-confidence, by making changes in school organisation, curriculum, teaching methods, and school-community relationships. The school is assisted in these endeavours by members of the Primary Task Force, who encourage the school to come up with a workable programme that will make a difference to the school. This can be a long and sometimes painful task, because it will involve the school in critical self-examination. The task force will not recommend assistance for a school that has not presented a thoughtful and cohesive plan.

The submissions from schools receive a final critical examination from the task force, and then are forwarded to the Minister for approval. The submissions have been received in batches. Phase 1 schools had their submissions approved in April, 1974; phase 2a schools in November, 1974; phase 2b in February; and phase 3, the country schools, will receive approval during March. Cadell is a phase 3 school. With respect to the kinds of special assistance available to priority project schools, there have been several misunderstandings. First, it should be made clear that the term "disadvantaged school" does not necessarily refer to the state of the building, the library, or the area of playing space available, or any aspect of the physical provision. Some disadvantaged schools have quite recent buildings, good libraries, and open units with ample playing space. Mansfield Park Primary is one such school.

A disadvantaged school is one attended by disadvantaged children, and they are children who come from areas of low income and high migrant density. Thus, where disadvantaged schools are also lacking in physical provision, major upgrading and replacement programmes can be put in hand, and the capital funds are expended for this purpose. However, the recurrent funds are expended in four main areas: equipment and materials; personnel, both professional and ancillary; minor works; and provision for trips and excursions. It should be emphasised that the various items of the assistance must be seen as parts of a planned school programme.

Concerning Cadell school, in particular, the programme as revised by the task force aims to:

(1) raise the level of reading achievement in the school;

(2) establish a resource centre for the efficient use of the school's equipment in a building, to be provided not out of commission funds but by transport from another site;

(3) improve the standards in basic mathematics.

These objectives will require:

(1) a language master—$210.

(2) software for a language master—$260.

(3) reading kits—$55.

(4) 10 additional hours a week of teacher-aide time—$1 300.

(5) materials for upgrading resource centre—$3 000.

(6) S:R.A. mathematics facts kit—$125.

This gives a total expenditure for 12 months of $4 950. It is significant to note that the enrolment of the school is 90. On a per capita basis, the school will receive rather more than others.

The original estimate by the school was for a total expenditure in excess of $40 000. This was considered by the task force to be totally disproportionate. One of the difficulties- encountered was that the upgrading of the resource centre was considered by the school to require a new building at an estimated cost of $30 000. This is not possible in terms of the school's numbers. The possibility of transporting a spare portable wooden room to Cadell is now being investigated.

MODBURY SOUTH SPECIAL SCHOOL

In reply to Mrs. BYRNE (March 5).

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Work on Modbury South Special School is on schedule. It is expected that the school will be completed late this year ready for occupation at the beginning of the 1976 school year.

TYRE LOADING CAPACITIES

In reply to Mr. BOUNDY (February 26).

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: In determining gross vehicle weight and gross, combination weight limits, the procedures adopted utilise the rated capacities of tyres as laid down by the tyre and rim standards manual. In cases where tyre equipment is manufactured overseas, the rated capacity as laid down by the tyre manufacturer on a recognised international standard applicable to the particular tyre in use is issued in lieu of the tyre and rim standards manual. The establishment of a satisfactory relationship between the aggregate capacity of the tyres of a vehicle and the vehicle's gross weight limit is an involved subject, but in general terms it can be stated that gross weight limits are determined which ensure that, under, the terms of operation governed by the Road Traffic Act legislation as a whole, the tyres of the rated vehicle will not be loaded in excess of acceptable tyre overload maximums. The "maximum tyre overload" standards adopted are those as recommended in the draft regulations defining vehicle construction, equipment and performance standards endorsed by the Australian Transport Advisory Council.

Generally it has been found that tyre equipment fitted as standard by manufacturers is adequate to operate safely the vehicle under the legislative provisions applicable in this State, at the manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating, plus a 20 per cent excess loading, and in these cases the manufacturer's rating is adopted as a gross vehicle weight limit. However, in a minority of cases the tyre equipment fitted does not satisfy these requirements, and a lower gross weight limit is determined to guard against tyre overload beyond the prescribed limits. In the main, these latter-mentioned cases arise when vehicles having front axle tyre equipment of sufficient capacity to suit the more restrictive maximum front axle weights, which apply in some Eastern States, are placed in service in this State without a change to heavier tyre equipment more suited to the higher front axle weights permitted in this State. The determination of these lower limits is considered to be an important step taken in the interests of road safety. Owners who object to a determined gross weight limit marginally below the manufacturer's rating have the opportunity of reinstatement to the full manufacturer's rating if appropriate tyre equipment is installed. It is true to state, therefore, that in a minority of cases ratings on new vehicles differ from those applying in other States, but this is largely brought about by variations in State legislation applicable to loading of vehicles and the effect of these variations on the safe loading of vehicle components, including tyres.

ROAD MAINTENANCE CHARGES

In reply to Mr. VENNING (February 20).

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The committee to consider the conditions of operation of commercial road transport (the Flint committee) has completed its investigations into road maintenance charges, and its final report is expected to be ready for presentation to the Government about the end of this month.

BRUKUNGA CREEK

In reply to Mr. WARDLE (February 26).

The Hon. D. J, HOPGOOD: The South Australian Mines Department has been concerned for some time about the escape of acid waters with high iron and other heavy metal concentrations into Dawesley Creek from the closed Brukunga mine which had belonged to Nairne Pyrites Limited. Complaints had been received from landholders down Dawesley Creek and along the lower parts of the Bremer River. The Australian Mineral Development Laboratories (Amdel) was asked to investigate existing environmental conditions in and around the Brukunga mine, examine methods of treating the acid waters, and recommend procedures by which Dawesley Creek could be kept free of polluted water.

The following work has been carried out. Chemical analyses were made over the 12 months period from April, 1973 to 1974, of water from Dawesley Creek, within and below the Brukunga mine. The pollutants entering the creek have been identified by chemical analysis of the major water flows. Criteria of acceptable water quality for irrigation and livestock drinking have been ascertained and used to determine the acceptability of the waters leaving the mine. A study has been made of the chemical composition of the precipitates and evaporites being deposited in Dawesley Creek; the significance of dyes and alkalinity in the Dawesley Creek water upstream from the mine; the origin of the acid waters; and the total disturbance of the environments has been summarised in the form of impact and cause-effect-correction type reactions.

Treatment methods for the prevention of the pollution of Dawesley Creek have been examined, including dilution, diversion, prevention, evaporation, neutralisation and revegetation. The neutralisation method has been studied in the laboratory using waste "caustic mud" and "grit" alkali available from the manufacture of sodium hydroxide and hydrated lime. A bulk trial test has been made with the assistance of Adelaide Brighton Cement Limited of the treatment of highly acid water in a small dam with a tanker load of quick-lime, and further laboratory tests were made to see why neutralisation did not occur. Various rehabilitation procedures have been considered, and their cost and effectiveness compared and recommendations made on the work required to solve the acid mine drainage problem. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has also been working on the problem and has carried out monthly sampling surveys in the past 18 months of the Bremer River and its tributaries, which include Dawesley Creek. It has also costed various remedial schemes which have been proposed.

Conclusions and recommendations: The survey of the mine area and downstream. Dawesley Creek has shown that significant amounts of acid, sulphate and heavy metals (especially iron, aluminium, manganese and zinc and the trace elements nickel, cobalt, copper and cadmium) are entering the. Bremer River system even when most of the main seepages are stopped from entering Dawesley Creek. Under the best conditions, Dawesley Creek has contained harmful amounts of one or more of the above heavy metals for at least 16 kilometres downstream. Under adverse conditions, when uncontrolled or "out-of-phase" releases of acid waters have occurred, the river system has been contaminated with dissolved heavy metals as far down as Langhorne Creek.

An extensive examination of the situation has shown that there is no quick, cheap method of solving the acid drainage problem. The production of acid waters high in dissolved metals from the abandoned mine will be a continuing process as long as fresh water and air is contacting the newly exposed unweathered sulphide minerals in the quarry and the mine dumps. The bulk neutralisation test showed that the simple mass treatment of the acid water with even quick-lime did not work-because, although excess quick-lime was used and temporarily agitated with compressed air, only about a third of the lime was used up and the water was still strongly acid a week later. A layer of unreacted lime was found to have formed in the bed of the dam covered with a layer of mud and sludge. Thus, efficient agitation is necessary. with any neutralisation method. Amdel considers that one of three basic schemes each with a capital expenditure greater than $600 000 will be required. The three schemes being considered are as follows:

Prevention scheme: The diversion of fresh waters including Dawesley Creek, the sealing of the quarry benches and recycling the acid waters from the tailing dam.

Evaporation scheme: The diversion of fresh waters including Dawesley Creek when at low flow and the collection and evaporation of the acid water in ponds.

Neutralisation scheme: The diversion of fresh waters including Dawesley Creek and the collection and neutralisation of the acid waters.

All those schemes incorporate the diversion of fresh waters so that the amount of water contacting the metal sulphide or mixing with the acid drainage water is kept to a minimum. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has estimated the first part of this diversion, and. the collection of the remaining major uncontrolled acid drainage water will cost $160 000 to $180 000, and arrangements are being made to have this work carried out. (This does not include the diversion of the Dawesley Creek at times of low flow, which will probably be the next construction as it would assist any of the schemes.) After much consideration, the neutralisation scheme is favoured above the others but, to confirm this, a pilot neutralisation plant is to be set up at Brukunga and operated on a continuous basis for two or three months. Information will be obtained on the best materials to use to neutralise the acid and deposit the heavy metals, the agitation times required, any problems that are likely to occur with the disposal of the bulky precipitates formed, and the cost of the final scheme.

MONARTO

In reply to Mr. WARDLE (February 20).

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The honourable member requested information regarding the intentions of. the Monarto Development Commission concerning certain small allotments within the designated site of the city. In. particular, he raised the matter of the Lutheran church property and certain dwelling allotments on the eastern fringe of the designated site. It is true that there are a few special cases where; at the request of the owners concerned, the commission has delayed acquisition, and these are in fact three residential dwellings in the eastern green belt which are not required for development purposes, the Lutheran church and the future Murray Bridge cemetery land. However, in each case the properties will be sold to the commission on a cash adjustment basis when the land tenure system for Monarto is finalised so that boundaries can be adjusted and titles changed for the new land tenure system. This means that there is no change in the overall policy to acquire the whole of the site.

MAGILL HOME

Dr. TONKIN (on notice):

1. Are conditions at the Magill Home such that they would comply with the regulations under the Health Act, 1935-1972, in respect of the licensing of private hospitals, nursing homes and rest homes and, if not, what are the deficiencies at present?

2. Will the intended programme of reconstruction and building result in conditions that will comply with these regulations?

3. If not, when is it expected these standards will be reached?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The replies are as follows:

1. There are deficiencies at Magill Home which do not meet the standards of the regulations under the Health Act. The problems are mainly in the toilet-ablution-pan rooms areas, which are old and poorly designed.

2. Yes.

3. Urgent renovation work to alleviate some of the problems will commence by the end of March, 1975. The major renovation programme is still the subject of studies by the Community Welfare Department, the Public Buildings Department and the Public Works Committee.

HOSPITALS

Dr. TONKIN (on notice): What is the present waiting list time for each of the following conditions at the Royal Adelaide and Queen Elizabeth Hospitals, respectively—

(*a*) out-patient appointment for an eye test for spectacles;

(*b*) out-patient appointment for electrocardiogram (E.C.G.) referred by general practitioner;

(*c*) out-patient appointment for X-ray investigation of stomach (barium meal) referred by general practitioner;

(*d*) operation for cataract;

(*e*) operation for bunions;

(*f*) operation for varicose veins;

(*g*) operation for hernia;

(h) tonsilectomy;

(*i*) hysterectomy (non-urgent); and

(*j*) prostatectomy (non-urgent)?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The reply is as follows:

Waiting Time:

	Royal Adelaide Hospital	Queen Elizabeth Hospital
(a)	6 months	3 to 4 months
(*b*)	On demand	On demand
(*c*)	3 weeks	2 weeks
(*d*)	2 to 3 months	6 to 8 months on average
(*e*)	12 to 18 months	12 to 24 months
(*f*)	12 to 18 months	4 months
(*g*)	12 months	3 to 4 months
(*h*)	5 to 6 months	4 to 6 months
(*i*)	3 weeks	8 weeks
(*j*)	2 to 3 months	2 months

LEPTOSPIROSIS

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (on notice):

1. What is the incidence of leptospirosis in South Australia?

2. What actions are being taken to detect and eradicate the disease?

3. What funds are allocated to the Agriculture Department for testing by the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science in connection with this disease?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The replies are as follows:

1. The incidence of leptospirosis in domestic animals in South Australia is low with only sporadic outbreaks being recorded in cattle and pigs.

2. Investigations into leptospirosis are carried out both by officers of the Agriculture Department and private veterinary practitioners. The disease is generally not amenable to eradication. Recommendations are made to stockowners on control procedures which usually involve treatment and vaccination.

3. None.

DEMAC CLASSROOMS

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (on notice):

1. At present how many Demac classrooms are planned for erection in South Australia?

2. What is the estimated life of these buildings?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The replies are as follows:

1. It is estimated that by June 30, 1975, 190 Demac units will have been provided to South Australian schools. The number of Demac units to be constructed for education purposes in 1975-76 has not yet been finally determined. It is likely to be at least 400, and may be as high as 500.

2. It should be noted that, although Demac buildings are relatively easily relocated from one site to another, it is intended, and was intended from the outset, that the great majority of them would be provided as permanent accommodation. While it is probable that the life of these buildings would be slightly Jess than those of brick construction, it is expected that their life will be at least equal to that of the Samcon buildings which have been widely used in our schools in recent years. The life of any building will be reduced, of course, if it is subject to numerous relocations rather than being set permanently in one place.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Dr. EASTICK (on notice):

1. What contractors have been used on the Parliament House renovations project?

2. What specific contracts were let, and to which companies?

3. How many tenders were received for each of the contracts?

4. Was the lowest tender accepted in each case and, if not, which ones were for a sum greater than the lowest tender, and on what criteria was the decision made?

5. Has any of the contracts been subject to an increase in the amount owed to the contractor and, if so, which ones, by what amount, and for what reasons?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The replies are as follows:

1. 2. and 3. See attached schedules.

SCHEDULE OF CONTRACTS LET ON THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE RENOVATIONS AND UPGRADING PROJECT

Contractor	Contract	No. of tenders received
Chep Handling Systems	Hire of forklift	1
S. C. J. Slagter	Bricklaying	1
Redfixers Pty. Ltd.	Fix reinforcement	3
Adelaide Mastic Service Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix waterproof membrane	1
D. & N. Steel Fabrication Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix metalwork	2
Tubemakers of Australia Pty. Ltd.	Supply and manufacture structural steelwork	4
S. C. J. Slagter	Bricklaying	1
Rapid Metal Developments Pty. Ltd.	Hire of scaffolding	1
Abel Core Cut Co. Pty. Ltd.	Doorway and hole cutting	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Erection of floor beams	1
F.M.E. Reinforcing Pty. Ltd.	Fix reinforcing	1
Hills Industries Ltd.	H.A.-T.U. system	2
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fabricate monorail	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Steelworker	1
Abel Core Cut Co. Pty. Ltd.	Additional drilling	1
Marble & Cement Work Co.	Screed concrete floor	3
Sarflow Sales Pty. Ltd.	Ventilation grilles	1
Chep Handling Systems	Hire of forklift	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of mechanical pump	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of crane	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix roofing steelwork	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Remove existing trusses	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Erection of beams	1
D. R. Fullerton Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix louvres and birdproofing	1
A. V. Jennings Pty. Ltd.	Demolition of kerbing	1
Tubemakers of Australia Pty. Ltd.	Supply and. manufacture structural steel	2
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Hire of steel erection equipment	1
A.R.C. Engineering	Supply and fix reinforcing	2
Rapid Metal Developments Pty. Ltd.	Supply and deliver formwork	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of concrete pump	1
F.M.E. Reinforcing Pty. Ltd.	Supply, cut etc. reinforcing	2
Monier Granite	Supply and erect marble work	2
Gatic Aust. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix gatic covers	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Supply pipes and bends	1
Adelaide Vinyl Floors	Supply and fix skirtings	2
Capper Construction Co. Pty Ltd.	Hire of crane	i
D. & N. Steel Fabricators Pty. Ltd.	Supply and erect metalwork	3
Albert Del Fabbro Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install terrazzo partitions	4
Modular Ceilings Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install ceiling	1
Solomons Floor Coverings	Supply and fix acoustic wall hanging carpets	1
Bissland Painters Pty. Ltd.	Wool wall coverings	3
Stagesound Aust. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install speech reinforcing and recording system	2
G.K.N. Building & Engineering	Supply and erect scaffold	2
Surface Treatment S.A. Pty. Ltd.	Sprayed vermieulite	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and manufacture floor joists	2
Monier Granite	Alter and extend granite work	2
Thompson & Harvey Ltd.	Supply and install glazing	3
Hills Industries Ltd.	Extension of TV system	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of crane	1
R. G. & S. G. Tolmer	Removal of debris	1
R. G. & S. G. Tolmer	Bituminous paving	3
J. Furlani	Supply and fix mosaic floor tiles	4
Thompson & Harvey Ltd.	Supply and manufacture glazing	2
Wormald International (Aust.) Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install smoke detectors	1
Rees & Jones Pty. Ltd.	Supply external grilles	1
Thompson & Harvey Ltd.	Supply glass and glazing	i
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of crane	1
Johns & Waygood Ltd.	Installation of strangers lift	3
Brownbuilt Ltd.	Supply and erect compactus	3
Fairey Australasia Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix messenger call and P.A. systems	6
Carpet Service Pty. Ltd.	Make and lay carpet	1
Simplex International Time Equip.	Supply and installation of time indication system	1
Hazemeyer—S.A.E. Switchgear Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install transformer	3
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Hire of crane	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of concrete pump	1
Fairey Australasia Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install intercom	1
A.R.C. Engineering Pty. Ltd.	Supply of reinforcement	1
Dominant Cleaning Services Pty. Ltd.	Clean House of Assembly	1
Bissland Painters	Paint relief grilles	1
Monier Granite	Supply and fix black granite	1
Australian Post Office	Rewiring of telephones	1
Hills Industries Ltd.	Repair antenna cable	1
Carpet Service	Relay carpet	1
Carpet Service	Supply and fix carpet	1
Department of Mines	Drilling and blasting	1
I.D.C. Cutters	Drilling	1
D. & N. Steel Fabrications	Additional fencing	1
Dominant Cleaning Service	Extra costs (cleaning)	1
Marcris Industries Pty. Ltd.	Supply fire door	2
Marcris Industries Pty. Ltd.	Supply fire doors	2
Albert Del Fabbro Pty. Ltd.	Supply terrazzo partitions	1

Contractor	Contract	No. of tenders received
Fairey Australasia Pty. Ltd.	Variation to A of Q 6655	1
Stagesound Aust. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and install equipment (variation)	1
Solomons Carpets	Supply carpet	
Muggleton & Vawser	Aluminium air grilles	1
G.K.N. Building & Engineering	Supply and erect scaffold	1
Thompson & Harvey Ltd.	Supply and remove glass	4
Nicholls. Crane Services	Hire of crane	1
Solomons Carpets	Make and lay carpet	3
I. D. C. Cutters	Cut floors and drill	1
Lindenthall Constructions	Fill cracks in walls	1
Pitcher Decorators	Supply and paint Premier's suite	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of crane	1
Cailek Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Transfer of beams	1
Solomons Carpets	Make and lay carpet	3
Knox Engraving Pty. Ltd.	Supply finger plates	1
C. Rothall & Co. Pty. Ltd.	Clean up site	1
Kornblums Ltd.	Supply and make curtains	2
A.R.C. Engineering	Supply of reinforcing	2
A.R.C. Engineering	Variation to original contract	1
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of concrete pump	1
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and manufacture steelwork	1
Albert Del Fabbro Pty. Ltd.	Installation of terrazzo partitions	3
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix steelwork	1
Bissland Partitions	Preparation of walls	1
Rapid Metal Developments	Hire of scaffold	2
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fabricate beams	5
Wilson & Pryor	Lawn and shrub planting	4
Thompson & Harvey Ltd.	Remove glass and reglaze	3
G.K.N. Building & Engineering	Hire and erection of scaffold	2
Nicholls Crane Services	Hire of crane	1
Surface Treatment (S.A.) Pty. Ltd.	Chiller room ceilings	2
A.R.C. Engineering Pty. Ltd.	Supply and manufacture reinforcing	2
Capper Construction Co. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix chequer plate cover	2
Variflow S.A. Pty. Ltd.	Supply and manufacture air relief grilles	3
Sanders, Roberts & Co.	Supply and manufacture sound attenuating doors	1
G.K.N. Building & Engineering	Erect and clear away scaffold	2
Hazemeyer—S.A.E. Switchgear Pty Ltd.	Supply and install transformer end and switchgear	1
Adelaide Vinyl Floors	Supply and lay vinyl and industrial flooring	4
Californian Iron Works	Supply and installation of booklift	4
Cyclone K-M Products Pty. Ltd.	Supply and erect chainwire gates and fencing	2
J. Furlani	Fix tiling	1
Solomons Carpets	Supply and stick carpets	1
Mardaw Soft Furnishers Pty. Ltd.	Supply and fix curtains	2
Brownbuilt Ltd.	Supply and fix racking for map storage	1
Monier Granite	Granite work (variation to original order)	1

4. For all contracts except one, the lowest tender was accepted. The lowest tender received for the supply and fixing of mosaic wall and floor tiles was considered unrealistic in comparison to the departmental estimate and following further investigation, another tender was accepted.

5. Special consideration was given to a claim from one contractor for an increase in his contracted sum due to escalation. This contract "for the supply and fixing of mosaic floor tiles", extended over a long period and an increase of $2 700 was considered reasonable.

COUNCIL BOUNDARIES

Dr. EASTICK (on notice):

1. What action does the Minister intend to take in respect of those petitions requesting an alteration of council boundaries that were held by the Local Government Office before setting up the Royal Commission on local government boundaries?

2. Do councils that lodged these petitions require to take any further action?

3. In the event that there is no voluntary agreement between councils in respect of the. boundary changes required by these petitions, does the Minister intend initiating any further course of action?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The replies are as follows:

1. All petitions received were forwarded to the Royal Commission for consideration in conjunction with the overall investigation of council boundaries. I do not propose to take any action regarding the petitions until the Royal Commission reports on its task in achieving voluntary changes in respect of those councils concerned in petitions.

2. No.

3. The Local Government Act requires that decisions be made in respect of all petitions submitted. Accordingly, consideration will be given, at the appropriate time, to all petitions. This consideration will depend on the Royal Commission's efforts in achieving voluntary change and on its comments on the petitions received.

COUNCIL FINANCE

Dr. EASTICK (on notice):

1. Has the Minister received a letter from the District Clerk, District Council of Barossa, dated January 22, 1975, proposing amendments to the Local Government Act, which would liberalise the conditions under which councils may obtain temporary finance by way of bank overdraft?

2. If so, what action will the Government take to give effect to these recommendations?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The replies are as follows:

1. Yes.

2. A Bill to amend the Local Government Act will be introduced into this House today. This Bill includes an amendment to section 449 of the Act to empower a council, with the approval of the Minister, to exceed its maximum overdraft limits. This should meet the requirements of the District Council of Barossa and the council will be so advised.

WAGE CLAIMS

Mr. DEAN BROWN (on notice):

1. Is the Minister aware that there may be considerable time lags between when an increase in wages is granted by the court and when Government employees actually receive the increased amount of pay?

2. What action is being taken to ensure that pay increases granted by the court are actually paid to Government workers as quickly as possible?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Cabinet has authorised the Public Service Board to instruct departments to observe awards and industrial agreements which bind the Public Service Board or the South Australian Government. The board instructs departments to observe the new award giving effect to increased rates and/or improved conditions as soon as the new award is published in the *Government Gazette.* If retrospectivity is involved, the board seeks the approval of the Minister of Labour and Industry.

Delays have occurred in the payment of award increases primarily because of two factors: first, administrative and personnel problems in the Industrial Commission resulting in delays in the publication of awards; and secondly, the large increase in numbers of variations to awards which have to be processed by departmental pay offices. Action has been taken to eliminate the first of these delays by the Minister of Labour and Industry, who in January established a working party to examine delays that are occurring in the Industrial Commission. The working party under the chairmanship of the Industrial Registrar will consist of representatives of employees and representatives of employers.

In relation to the second reason for delays, the board is aware that departments have authorised a substantial amount of overtime for pay clerks in an endeavour to speed up payment. However, it must be remembered there are a large number of awards binding the board or the Government which are being varied in relation to wages and working conditions more frequently with less intervals of time between such variations. On occasions the Australian Government Workers Association itself has contributed to the delays. As an example affecting female employees in hospitals, the union was aware for some months that the final instalment for equal pay was due from February 1, 1975. Notwithstanding this the association lodged its claim only on February 7, 1975. As can be seen from the above, efforts are being made to minimise the delays which have been occurring.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice): When is it intended to bring down the reply, promised by the Premier on February 20, 1975, for the following week, to my question arising out of the circular sent out by the Australian Government Workers Association concerning the delay of Government pay increases to employees?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: See earlier reply.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (on notice): What economies have been requested of Government schools due to financial stringency?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Circulars were forwarded to all Government schools in January and February in which the co-operation of school principals was sought in the careful control of departmental expenditure. The circulars set out the areas in which control is to be exercised. They included: urgent minor repairs; employment of temporary relieving assistants; travel; supply of materials; supply of furniture and equipment; postage; telephones; and advertising.

SALT DAMP

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (on notice): What has been the result of the inquiries of the committee set up to study salt damp?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Investigations are under way. At this stage it is not known when they will be completed.

NURIOOTPA BY-PASS

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (on notice):

1. What stage has planning reached for the Nuriootpa by-pass road?

2. When is it expected that this road will be completed?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The replies are as follows:

1. Construction of the by-pass should commence this month.

2. December, 1977.

FAUNA AND FLORA

Dr. EASTICK (on notice):

1. Have any paid informants (otherwise known as procurators) ever been involved in tracing the activities of fauna and flora smugglers in South Australia? .

2. If any have been employed, or otherwise retained, have all information fees been paid?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: The replies are as follows:

1. Yes.

2. Yes, except for one instance where the arrangements have not yet been completed.

POLICE CADETS

Dr. EASTICK (on notice):

1. How many intakes of police cadets have been made this financial year?

2. Have any prospective cadets been advised of acceptance for courses commencing in March, April, May or June, 1975?

3. Are these courses proceeding, and, if not, why not?

4. Will any deferred courses affect the overall projected Police Force strength?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The replies are as follows:

1. Two intakes have been made in 1974-75: September and January.

2. Some prospective cadets have been advised of acceptance for a course commencing in March, 1975. Others have already been employed and held in reserve with a view to commencing a course in March, 1975. Cadet courses commence every 13 weeks, and the normal process will be followed this year for an intake for the course commencing June, 1975. Cadet courses have never been, and will not be, programmed for April or May.

3. Courses are proceeding for March and June.

4. No.

MONARTO

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice):

1. Is it the policy of the Government that public servants who must work at Monarto should live there?

2. If not—

(*a*) has that ever been the policy of the Government; and

(*b*) what is the policy of the Government concerning the housing of public servants who must work at Monarto?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The replies are as follows:

1. Yes, but on a voluntary basis. It is expected that the standard of housing and other amenities will be such that most public servants shall choose to live at Monarto.

2. See above, answer 1.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice):

1. How many copies of the first annual report of the Monarto Development Commission have been printed?

2. To whom have copies been distributed and at what cost?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The replies are as follows:

1. 4 000 copies.

2. 1 800 copies have been distributed to organisations and persons on the commission's mailing list. The remainder are held for release on request or for distribution to visitors. The cost of distributing the 1 800 copies was:

(*a*) 600 copies—no cost as existing hand courier services were used.

(*b*) 1 200 copies—mailing costs $396.66

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice): Is there now any justification for going on with the new city of Monarto?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes.

CLASSIFICATION OF PUBLICATIONS

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice):

1. Is it intended to alter the requirement under the regulations made pursuant to the Classification of Publications Act that an appellant supply to the Classification of Publications Board seven copies of each publication concerned and, if so, when?

2. If alteration is not to be made, why not?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The replies are as follows:

1. No.

2. It is necessary for a publisher, vendor or member of the public to submit one copy only of a publication for initial classification, but seven copies are required in the event of an appeal against an existing classification. Six copies are returned subsequently. This requirement ensures that each member of the board and the Registrar, at the one time, have a copy of the publication for detailed examination rather than trying to circulate a single copy over the period prior to the hearing. Each member also has the benefit of being able to refer to an individual copy during the hearing.

Only one application for an appeal hearing has been lodged and the Classification of Publications Board did not consider the application as an appeal- because it was not accompanied by the required number of copies of the book, *The Joy of Sex.* However, without in any way by-passing the need to comply with the requirements of the Act, the board discussed the publication again. The board, however, saw no reason to vary the existing classification. Subsequently the person concerned was informed of the conclusion, when it was pointed out that the publication has been on sale in South Australia for some months, had been serialised in a magazine and was in most other States an unrestricted publication.

If the onus to supply the required copies was shifted to the publisher or his agent in all cases, frivolous appeals might be lodged and the vendor could be placed in the position of supplying multiple copies of a great many issues.

PRIVATE BUSES

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice):

1. Which private bus lines have been taken over by the Municipal Tramways Trust since January 1, 1974?

2. Are any of the routes previously served by such private bus lines still being worked at a profit?

3. If so, which ones and how much is the profit?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The replies are as follows:

1. Bowman's Bus Services Proprietary Limited. Bridgland Passenger Transport Service Proprietary Limited, Campbell's Bus Services Proprietary Limited, Choats Passenger Service Proprietary Limited, Cole Bus Service Proprietary Limited, Ex-Servicemen's Omnibus Services Proprietary Limited, Harcourt Gardens Bus Service, Henstridge Bus Service, Morphett's Bus Service Proprietary Limited, Slattery's Bus Services Proprietary Limited, Thomas Tours Proprietary Limited, Transway Services Proprietary Limited.

2. No.

3. See 2 above.

INSTITUTE TRANSPORT

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice):

1. What action has the Government taken to provide public transport to persons using The Levels campus of the South Australian Institute of Technology?

2. Is the Government satisfied with public transport now available to such persons?

3. If not, what action does it intend to take and when?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The replies are as follows:

1. At the present time, the Municipal Tramways Trust provides the following services to The Levels:

(*a*) Bus route 503 from the city via Main North Road, continuing past the campus to the Para Hills and Salisbury East areas.

(*b*) Bus route 490 from Elizabeth via Main North Road.

Both of these services pick up and set down passengers at the entrance to the campus. Because of the distance of the institute buildings from Main North Road some buses on route 503 deviate in to the campus site.

The campus is poorly located with regard to major transport routes along the Main North Road and the North Gawler railway. The Government has had a number of discussions with the Institute of Technology administration to determine the possibility of making provision of pedestrian access from Green Fields railway station to the campus. An offer of $10 000, or half the total cost, was made by the Government towards the construction of the footway.

2. No, the Government will not be satisfied with public transport available to such persons, or to any other persons, until its programme of improvements to all public transport services has been completed. However, the public transport provided to The Levels is the best that can be provided at present.

3. The Government is planning improvements to all metropolitan bus services as the 380 new buses now on order progressively arrive. These improvements will include The Levels area. In addition, the Government will continue the negotiations relating to access from Green Fields station.

FARES

Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice):

1. What was the text of the preliminary press release made by the Minister of Transport on January 3, 1975, concerning increases in metropolitan train and bus fares and the discontinuance of some country rail services?

2. Why was it released before correction?

3. At what time did the Minister discuss the measures referred to in the corrected press release with representatives of unions with members concerned?

4. When will final decisions be taken on the matters contained in the press release?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The replies are as follows:

1. This is not available, as draft press releases are not kept on file.

2. In an endeavour to assist reporters.

3. During the morning of Friday, January 3, 1975.

4. In due course.

WATER AND SEWERAGE RATES

Mr. DEAN BROWN (on notice):

1. Will legislation be introduced before the end of the present Parliamentary session to ensure the introduction of value equalisation for the determination of property values for the assessment of water and sewerage rates?

2. Does the Government intend to charge for water and sewerage based on equalised property values for the July-September quarter of 1975?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The replies are as follows:

1. No; legislation will not be necessary.

2. Yes.

PENANG WEEK

Mr. DEAN BROWN (on notice):

1. What was the original pre-arranged amount of finance promised by the South Australian Government to meet travel and accommodation expenses for the group from Penang that visited Adelaide recently?

2. Did the Government pay the additional accommodation expenses when the group was transferred from the People's Palace to city motels and, if so, what were the additional expenses?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The replies are as follows:

J. $5 000.

2. No.

THEATRE 62

Mr. DEAN BROWN (on notice):

1. What was the State Government grant to Theatre 62 for the 1974-75 financial year?

2. Has the entire amount of this grant already been paid?

3. Has the Auditor-General examined the accounts and financial records of Theatre 62 since the examination for the 1973-74 annual report?

4. Is the Premier aware of the main reasons for the financial collapse of Theatre 62_and, if so, what were they?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The replies are as follows:

1. (*a*) $60 000 basic grant compared to $50 000 for 1973-74 period;

(*b*) $40 000 special grant, composed of $27 7.00 to repay debts accrued over a three-year period of operation, and $12 300 provided to enable the company to purchase necessary electrical equipment and fixtures.

2. Yes. If the company is "wound up" (and there has been no decision to follow that course of action by the board of Theatre 62 Regional Company Inc.) the Government will be repaid a substantial proportion of the $12 300 provided for equipment purchases, which have not yet been finalised.

3. The honourable member should be aware that the role of the Auditor-General includes examination of the financial records of Government departments, trusts, corporations and other State statutory bodies. As Theatre 62 Regional Company Inc. is none of these, the Auditor-General does not directly involve himself with that company. His staff, however, have had ready access to all Government records related to payment of subsidies by the Government.

Officers of the Arts Development Branch have sighted financial records of the company, and the certificate of an independent auditor for the 1973-74 period. At the Government's request, the company also employs a qualified financial adviser, who is now preparing a financial summary of operations for the last six months of 1974.

4. The expression "financial collapse" is at least premature and therefore inaccurate. The board of Theatre 62 Regional Company Inc. has experienced difficulty in continued full-time operation as a permanent theatre company, faced as the board is with inceasing costs of salaries, rentals, running costs and other normal business overheads. I assume the honourable member is aware that theatre personnel on awards were granted a national increase of 40 per cent during August, 1974.

The board has been advised by my Government that no further financial assistance is available during this financial period, in view of the present limitations on State finances. The board has therefore advised that, for the balance of this financial period, it will consider retrenchment of staff, release of offices, and hire of the theatre to casual users, to reduce expenditure and increase revenue. In addition, the board has appointed a steering committee to examine the company's future role in terms of desirable alternative theatre, and will make a submission in due course to the Arts Grants Advisory Committee of South Australia. That committee may recommend a subsidy during the 1975-76 period, if the committee's opinion is that the board's submissions would achieve higher theatre standards for this State.

MINISTER'S ABSENCE

The SPEAKER: Before calling for questions without notice, I inform honourable members that, in the absence on Ministerial duties of the honourable Minister of Environment and Conservation, any questions that would normally be directed to him may be directed to the honourable Minister of Transport.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Dr. EASTICK: Will the Premier say what co-operation or assistance the State Government offered officials of the Toyota Motor Company of Japan during their recent visit to Adelaide for discussions with Chrysler Australia Limited concerning the feasibility of setting up an engine manufacturing plant in this State? I understand that officials of the Toyota Motor Company were in Adelaide yesterday as part of a study examining prospects for setting up manufacturing operations in association with an Australian motor vehicle manufacturer. I further understand that officials from another Japanese firm (Nissan Motor Company) will also visit Adelaide soon for similar discussions. As the motor vehicle industry plays such a vital role in the State's economy, I expect that the Government has been vitally interested in the prospect of Japanese entry into the industry in this State. I am interested, therefore, to hear from the Premier what discussions his own advisers may have had with the visiting industrialists and what assistance or incentives may have been offered to help attract to this State any possible Australian development by either Toyota or Nissan.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I had discussions with the Toyota company yesterday, as did the Minister of Development and Mines and officers of the Industrial Development Division of my department. It was made

clear to Toyota that the policy accepted by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments was that it was unwise in the Australian economy to provide major manufacturing plants for motor vehicles additional to those already existing and that, in a domestic economy of the size of ours, to have four or five major manufacturers of motor cars was simply an uneconomic proposition that could adversely affect the economies of existing plants. Consequently, the view of both Governments was that additional manufacture should take place by using and extending existing capacity, and therefore the additional manufacture of small cars should take place in South Australia, based on the capacity of the Chrysler plant.

Dr. Eastick: Were they interested in the philosophy?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I beg the Leader's pardon?

Dr. Eastick: Were they interested in the philosophy?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Well, I am telling the Leader what was. made clear to the Toyota company, representatives of which came to South Australia because of what the company had already learnt of the proposals by the Commonwealth Government and the State Government and because the Commonwealth Government had accepted the plans, put forward in concert with the motor industry by this Government last year, providing for an 85 per cent local content and the local manufacture of small cars. It has been brought home to the company that the major componentry for any such car manufacture already exists in South Australia, and we had long discussions yesterday with the Toyota company and we will have discussions also with the Nissan company, which will have a survey team here soon. We expect the establishment of small car manufacture, in addition to what we have in South Australia at present, in due season, arising from those talks. At this stage, necessarily both the Toyota company and the Nissan company are in the early stages of their investigation, but the possibilities of providing additional factory space under the conditions offered already by the South Australian Government lo industry generally (the provision of some South Australian equity, of cheap industrial land, and of all the facilities of the industrial establishments we have at Lonsdale) were outlined to the Toyota company, and the company has expressed much interest.

Mr. COUMBE: The Premier has referred to his offer of assistance to industries to encourage them to come to South Australia. How does that statement measure up with the action taken last week at Port Stanvac? What was the real reason for the loss of the wax plant at Port Stanvac as, according to reports, that plant will not now be built? Does this action by the Government mean that South Australia is losing the economic industrial attraction it has had for industry for many years?

Mr. Venning: It hasn't had it for years.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, it certainly does not. In fact, the refinery at Port Stanvac has had quite signal assistance from the State, having received remissions in wharf rates to a marked degree. It has received assistance in the provision of the pipeline and also in relation to freights. At the time that the proposal for the lube-cracking refinery was put to the Government, we were requested to give marked additional assistance to what had already been given at Port Stanvac. At that time, I negotiated with the then General Manager of Mobil Oil Australia Limited saying that we were willing to give some assistance in future wharfage, but that that was the limit to which we could go. In addition to that, the refinery would be required to meet a reasonable rate provision as regards the District Council of Port Noarlunga.

Mr. Coumbe: What was that?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The rate provision concerning the Port Noarlunga council was as specified, and it was a concession. If the refinery were valued at what the average person's property in this community is valued, it would be paying a darn sight more.

Mr. Millhouse: How much?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It was proposed that it should pay a fair thing in relation to what was the amount—

Mr. Millhouse: You won't say.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will get for members a full report on what was sought by the council on the basis of valuations and what amount has been fixed—

Mr. Millhouse: We'll get it about this time next year.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Mitcham. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: What was eventually proposed to Mobil in relation to rates was a concession compared to what it would have to pay if it were charged at the normal valuation for that property. That was eventually agreed with the district council. Before this was fixed, we had a careful comparison made with the rates chargeable to competitive refineries elsewhere in Australia. If, in the circumstances, Mobil decides that it will not put a wax plant there, quite frankly that is not much skin off our nose.

Members interjecting:

Dr. Eastick: You're prepared to give it away.

The SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members on both sides know what they can expect concerning the implementation of Standing Orders, which will be strictly adhered to. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: If the honourable member is interested in industrial development, I assume he wants industrial development for the sake of providing secure employment in this State. The amount of additional employment that would have come out of that plant would have been minimal, whereas the unfairness to the ratepayers in the district of giving the amount of concession that the honourable member wants would have been mammoth. We were not willing to do that. We believe that industry should be charged a fair sum, (a concessional sum maybe, but a fair sum) in relation to its investment in the area.

Mr. Dean Brown: If they leave the State, that's just bad luck.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Davenport. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: As to frightening industry away from South Australia, I suggest—

Mr. Gunn: What about the protection for Mr. Apap and his gang?

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Eyre. I am serious in the statement I have made that Standing Orders will be strictly adhered to. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Government has been signally successful in attracting both new and expanded industry to South Australia. In fact, one of the reasons why for the first time in any economic down-turn we have the lowest proportion of industrially unemployed at the moment is that very fact. I refer the honourable

member to industries close to the area he is talking about, such as Rainsfords Metal Products Proprietary Limited, which wrote to me only today to express its satisfaction with the assistance given to it by the State Government and whose General Manager stated that had it not been for that assistance his organisation would not have been able to have the expansion or to provide the employment for the hundreds of employees it is now employing. The assistance available to industry from this Government is greater than that in any other State, and the assistance that was offered to Toyota was that we would build whatever extra factory buildings were required under the lease-back system of the South Australian Housing Trust, that we would provide cheap industrial land that would be at a tithe of the cost it would have to pay for any expansion of its plant in Victoria, and that, in addition, we were willing to take part of the equity of the project. The organisation will not get better than that anywhere.

OVERLAND DERAILMENT

Mr. LANGLEY: Will the Minister of Transport say whether he has obtained from the Railways Commissioner a report on the derailment of the Overland near Murray Bridge yesterday? .

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Yes, I have been able to obtain a report and, for the information of the House—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am sure that most members will be interested in it, even if the member for Eyre is not. The Railways Commissioner has reported to me, only about an hour ago, as follows:

On Monday, March 10, 1975, the Overland from Melbourne, consisting of locomotives Nos. 945 and 939, a power van, seven sleeping cars, one first class sitting car, three economy sitting cars, one buffet car, one club car and a brakevan, was derailed on the main line at the Monteith siding, which is unattended. Ten vehicles were derailed. Immediate action was taken to convey 17 people by ambulance to the Murray Bridge Hospital, including 13 passengers, one Victorian Railways employee and four members of the South Australian Railways Catering and Trading Services. One passenger was subsequently transferred to Royal Adelaide Hospital for X-ray, and one other was transferred to Adelaide by taxi to connect with the 12.30 p.m. train to Port Pirie and subsequently to Perth. All other passengers and employees were discharged by 2 p.m., their injuries not proving serious.

When the main group of passengers arrived in Adelaide by passenger bus, 15 passengers reported minor injuries. The Railways medical officer was in attendance and made examinations where necessary. The remaining passengers were transferred to Adelaide by passenger bus, the first bus arriving in Adelaide at about 9.45 a.m. The cause of the derailment was due to a pair of broken fish-plates on the right-hand rail of the lead in the Monteith yard. The locomotives passed over the point of derailment safely as did the leading axle of the first vehicle, which was the power van. All other right-hand wheels of that vehicle and all right-hand wheels of the next two cars had been in derailment but had rerailed. The following 10 cars were derailed and remained coupled; three vehicles at the rear end of the train did not reach the point of derailment and remained on the track. The train was travelling at authorised speed through the section and there is no evidence of mismanagement by train staff. Extensive damage was caused to the main line and to the passenger vehicles. The passing siding was restored to traffic at 5.3 p.m. on March 10, and the recovery of vehicles is proceeding. At the time of writing—

that would have been about mid-morning—

six cars have been rerailed and four cars remain to be rerailed. All cars involved in the derailment are being shopped at Islington for inspection and repairs where necessary. Tn the meantime, the service is being maintained by vehicles from Victoria and we have had recourse to use our "AD" and "BD" cars from the Port Pirie service.

Although the track in this area has been continuously welded, joints in the turn-outs have been retained pending the development and testing of insulated joints suitable for continuously welded rail. A number of these joints has now been satisfactorily tested and numbers are currently being produced for installation in the south line. As these joints are installed, fish-plated joints will be eliminated from the main line. This programme is being accelerated on the south line. The Minister has the assurance of the Railways Commissioner that action is being taken to ensure that similar conditions do not exist elsewhere, in order to prevent a recurrence of the happening yesterday morning.

In addition, I wish to place on record, from my knowledge of the situation, the Government's appreciation of the magnificent work performed by those involved. Circumstances developed that could have been most serious but for the magnificent work of all the railway employees concerned; they are to be commended for their action in the interests of public safety.

ABORIGINAL HOUSING

Mr. SLATER: Can the Minister of Development and Mines, in his capacity as Minister in charge of housing, say how many Aboriginal funded houses are currently under the jurisdiction of the South Australian Housing Trust and how many are currently occupied by tenants? Further, can the Minister say whether (and in what locality) the purchase of such houses is continuing?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

FEMALE TITLE

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Will the Premier review the absurd decision announced recently that State Government departments are no longer to use the prefix "Miss" or "Mrs." when referring to or addressing women? I believe it was on Sunday that the Premier made a public announcement to this effect, and as a result of that announcement the following circular has been sent out by the Director of the Premier's Department (Mr. Bakewell):

In connection with International Women's Year, the Premier has announced that State Government departments are no longer to use the prefixes "Miss" or "Mrs." when referring to or addressing women. The prefix "Ms" is to be substituted in both cases. All records are to be altered as soon as possible. Pronunciation seems to vary but it is suggested that "Ms" be pronounced phonetically as in the terminal "ms" in "plums" rather than "Mizz".

I believe the absurdity of the situation is obvious from that directive, which has been issued as a result of the Premier's announcement. We could have the ludicrous situation of a public servant addressing Mr. and Mrs. Brown as Mr. and Ms . Brown. It seems to me that the suggestion is hardly worthy of serious consideration. It would be far better for the Premier to address as Ms only those people who wish to be referred to as such, instead of forcing people who have no taste whatsoever for this title to call themselves "Ms", to be pronounced as suggested in the directive.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The reply to the question is "No".

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Government departments will rightly remove from their current forms the description of women by their marital status, compared to the description of men by their occupation. At present on most Government forms men are described by their occupation and women by their marital status. As that practice is sexist, improper and discriminatory, it will be eliminated.

It is difficult for Government departments to know whether they are appropriately addressing women as either "Mrs." or "Miss", because it is often difficult to discover the true situation. Some Government departments can ascertain the correct title simply because, on their forms that have to be filled out or the returns that are made to them, women are described at present according to their marital status. However, when this practice has been eliminated that will be no longer possible. The number of protests we receive from women writing to Government departments objecting to being described as "Mrs." when in fact they should be called "Miss", and vice versa, is considerable.

Mr. Millhouse: You'll get many more now.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We may, but people will see the good sense of this. There is nothing in the prescription by Government departments of this procedure that means that people necessarily at a personal level will be addressed any differently from the way they are addressed now.

Mr. Goldsworthy: That's not what the directive says.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member obviously has not bothered carefully to read the directive. The reply to his question is "No". Now that Government departments are eliminating discriminatory features in ascertaining information about the marital status of women, it is inappropriate to continue to try to ascertain their marital status without the information necessary to do so.

HOUSING ADVISORY BUREAU

Mr. PAYNE: Can the Minister of Development and Mines, as Minister in charge of housing, say whether the South Australian Government supports the concept of a national housing advisory bureau and whether he sees any possible conflict with the functions of the South Australian Housing Trust? My attention was drawn to this matter by an article written by Kate Holland who, as a matter of interest, describes herself as "Ms" and who as the Policy Officer for the Australian Council of Social Services, stated in the November, 1974, issue of *Community,* which is the journal of the Urban and Regional Development Department—

The SPEAKER: I hope it is not lengthy.

Mr. PAYNE: Certainly not, Sir, I would not try to quote anything too long. She stated:

> The Australian Government has announced its intention of setting up a National Housing Advisory Bureau. If this bureau had offices operating at the local level, it could provide advisory and supportive services to all sectors of the housing market, including those either seeking or providing rental housing.

I do not believe the question needs further explanation other than to point out that that is the reason I referred to the Housing Trust when asking the question.

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: There would be no conflict. The Housing Trust of necessity deals with people who are on its waiting list. There are various circumstances in which people require rental accommodation in the private sector. Perhaps people have only recently put their names down for Housing Trust accommodation because there is not significant trust accommodation in the area in which they are seeking employment. Therefore, there is a necessity for housing information centres that will assist people who are looking for accommodation to purchase or rent in the private sector. Last year the Government, at my suggestion, knowing that a certain person who is well known in social welfare circles would be spending some time in the United Kingdom, determined to pay the cost for one week of this person's expenses in the U.K. while the housing information centres that operate in that country were investigated by him.

That report was made available to us and, in turn, has been handed to the Commonwealth Minister for Housing and Construction (Mr. Johnson) with the suggestion that some sort of joint operation be launched between the Australian and State Governments. The matter is still being examined. For the honourable member's benefit, this State is not in a position now to fund such a programme on its own but, if the necessary finance was made available by the Australian Government, we would certainly want to be involved. Several matters are still to be resolved. They include the extent to which the Department of Social Security and such a thing as the Australian Assistance Plan should be involved; and the extent to which our own Community Welfare Department or any other Government departments that have regional offices, or are likely to have regional offices in the next few years, is also being investigated.

I see such a proposal as supporting or assisting in more areas than merely in the matter of rental accommodation: for example, assistance in understanding the verbiage of housing contracts. From time to time, both the Prices and Consumer Affairs Branch and the Builders Licensing Board receive inquiries which, strictly speaking, are not within their charter but which are in some sort of limbo between the areas for which those bodies are responsible. Housing information centres would fill that gap. All I can tell the honourable member at this stage is that we are aware of the problem. The Government has sought to inform itself on how to solve the problem, and we are continuing to explore possible solutions with the Australian Government.

DENTAL CLINIC

Mr. MATHWIN: Will the Premier say whether it is the Government's policy to discriminate against independent schools in relation to the new dental clinic, which has now been completed, in Bells Road, Somerton Park? The question relates especially to the Health Department, and a report in the local newspaper, the *Guardian,* last week states that 10 primary and infants schools in the Glenelg and Ascot Park areas, as well as in the district of Hanson, are involved or will be involved in the scheme. However, in the same general area there are several independent schools, including Our Lady of Grace, Sacred Heart, Woodlands, Christ the King, St. Mary's, and Westminster. The parents of children at these schools pay tax, but they are not all rich people, and their children should have equal opportunities to use this facility.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am not aware of the details of proposals about the clinic, but I assure the honourable member that it never has been the Government's policy to discriminate against non-State schools. It was this Government that first announced that it would assist non-State schools in South Australia. However, I will get a full report for the honourable member.

PORT AUGUSTA TRAFFIC

Mr. KENEALLY: Will the Minister of Transport authorise an investigation into the traffic flow at the intersections of Flinders Terrace and Highway 1 and also Carlton Parade and Highway 1, Port Augusta, with a view to installing traffic lights? The two intersections are the busiest in Port Augusta, especially as regards traffic on Highway 1, which the Minister knows is a busy highway. Delays of up to five minutes have been experienced at the

intersections in periods of peak traffic, and, whilst I do not suggest that there has been any serious accident on these intersections, such delays are a potential traffic hazard.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I shall be pleased to refer the matter to the Highways Department, asking the department to comply with the honourable member's request.

WAGE INDEXATION

Mr. MILLHOUSE: As my question deals with a matter of policy, I ask it of the Premier. Does the Government support the policy of either the Commonwealth Government or the Australian Council of Trade Unions as expressed by its President regarding wage indexation? If the Government supports neither policy, what is its policy, if any, on this matter? There seems to be yet another public divergence of opinion between the Commonwealth Government (as expressed by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Minister for Labor and Immigration) and the President of the A.C.T.U., who, I think, is still President of the Australian Labor Party. This time the divergence is on the question of wage indexation, which is vital to the economy of this country. I understand that Mr. Hawke, of the A.C.T.U., definitely wants wage indexation but that the Commonwealth Government is suggesting a six-month trial of wage indexation. This controversy has now come into the open and is reported on the front page of the *Australian* and on page 3 of the *Advertiser* this morning. Therefore, I ask the Premier, as he leads a Labor Government, whether he supports his Commonwealth colleagues or the President of his Party, or whether his Government has some other policy. If it has some other policy, I ask him what that policy is.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I should have thought that the honourable member long ago would be able to answer that question for himself, as the South Australian Government's representation before the Commonwealth tribunal has been in support of the Commonwealth Government case. This has been clear and has been public knowledge for some time. The South Australian Government supports wage indexation to a plateau level.

Mr. Millhouse: To what?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It supports it to a plateau level but, beyond that, there should be a flat-rate increase, and wage increases apart from this should merely be given to deal with anomalies and distorted relativities, not for any major additional increase in wages beyond the indexation principle. I have stated in this House several times that this Government's submission to Premiers' Conferences has been for the adoption of an indexation principle of that kind and its reinforcing of penal taxation provisions that would make it quite uneconomic to have any sort of extra-award agreements outside the indexation principle.

Mr. Millhouse: Do you want only the six months trial?

The SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member infringes Standing Orders again this afternoon, I will have no hesitation in naming him. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: This submission was put forward again at the recent Premiers' Conference. It gained the support of the Victorian and Western Australian Premiers, as well as the Tasmanian Premier, and working parties from the Commonwealth Government and the State Governments are now dealing with the matter.

MOUNT GAMBIER COURTHOUSE

Mr. BURDON: Will the Minister of Works' say what is the future of the old Mount Gambier courthouse? A large new modern courthouse will be opened at Mount Gambier soon, and the courthouse that has served the district for about 100 years will no longer be used for its present purpose. As much interest has been shown in the future of the old courthouse, I should like the Minister to tell me what plans the department may have for its future use.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: No firm decision has been made about the future of the old courthouse at Mount Gambier. The National Trust, I think about two years ago, was given the opportunity to take it over, and I understood that it intended to develop the building as a museum. However, as I am not certain what progress has been made regarding that matter, I will have it checked for the honourable member and let him know the position as soon as possible.

DAYLIGHT SAVING

Mr. VENNING: Will the Premier consider having a referendum held on daylight saving? It is understandable that, at present, with the switch just having been made from daylight saving time to central standard time, people throughout the State, especially those living in country areas, are concerned about daylight saving. Consequently, I have received from my constituents correspondence on the matter. Moreover, I have noticed in the *Advertiser* several letters expressing concern about the effects of daylight saving in this State. Will the Premier consider having this referendum held, particularly as Western Australia has conducted a referendum on the matter (the decision was against daylight saving) and Queensland does not have daylight saving. As these two progressive States will not have daylight saving, will the Premier consider having a referendum on the question?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No. The reasons for the decision on daylight saving in relation to our markets in Victoria and New South Wales and the fact that 85 per cent of our industrial product goes there have already been fully explained to the House.

SUPREME COURT APPEAL

Mr. EVANS: Can the Minister of Community Welfare say whether the Community Welfare Department has offered a bribe or tried to coerce a Mr. W. K. Rooney to drop his appeal to the Supreme Court? If it has, why does the department fear this appeal? I wish to refer to some of the correspondence between Mr. Rooney and other people concerning this matter. On December 8, Mr. Rooney wrote to Miss Wendy Purcell of the Australian Legal Aid Office, the last paragraph of that letter stating:

> Your inability to grant or refuse my legal aid request for nearly four months has all the earmarks of a "legal run around" and the attempts to talk me out of the *inter se* question constitute a clear interference with the course of justice. In view of the above would you kindly inform me whether or not I will be granted legal aid to argue my amended grounds of appeal including the *inter se* question?

On February 18, the Legal Aid Office contacted Mr. Rooney by letter, over the signature of Miss Wendy Purcell, as follows:

> I have recently been advised by the South Australian Crown Law Department that they have received recent instructions from the Community Welfare Department. Their instructions are that, should you withdraw your Supreme Court appeal, the department would not take action to enforce the sentence of imprisonment ordered by the late Mr. Humby, S.M. I have now been advised by our central office in Canberra, that, in view of the State Crown's undertaking, this office will not grant you legal assistance to continue with the appeal.

Referring to the letter of February 18, Mr. Rooney's letter to the Community Welfare Department, dated March 3, states:

According to this letter the Community Welfare Department will not enforce the gaol sentence imposed upon me by the late Mr. Humby, S.M. if I withdraw my, appeal to the Supreme Court against this sentence. This appeal now stands adjourned by Mr. Justice Zelling. Could you please supply me with all relevant details as to how the department proposes to assure me of immunity against the sentence of 28 days imprisonment, passed on me by the late Mr. Humby, S.M.? Because of the urgency of this matter, I would be obliged if I could receive your letter, containing the above details, within the next seven days.

There has also been comment in the daily newspapers about the matter. Finally, can the Minister say whether the Australian Legal Aid Office is working in collusion with the Community Welfare Department to interfere with the proper course of justice?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The answer is "No". However, the seriousness of the allegations made justify a much more complete answer than that. Following the dissolution of the Rooneys' marriage, an order was made by the Master of the Supreme Court on March 30, 1962, that Mr. Rooney pay maintenance for the two infant children of the marriage and that the payments be made to what was then the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board at Adelaide (now Community Welfare Department) on behalf of the wife, Mrs. Roma Collison (formerly Rooney). In February, 1969, one of the children having obtained employment, the department informed Mr. Rooney that it in future would collect only $6 a week. In fact, Mr. Rooney fell into arrears as to the reduced amount and made it necessary for the department to enforce the order. For legal reasons, it was necessary to enforce the order for the full amount due on the face of the order, which at November 3, 1972, stood at $170. The late Mr. Humby, S.M., embarked upon the hearing of the complaint by the department for non-compliance with the order. Mr. Rooney then obtained from Mr. Justice Zelling in the Supreme Court on March 9, 1973, an order calling upon the magistrate to show cause why orders of prohibition or, in the alternative, *certiorari* should not be made to prohibit him from further proceeding with the hearing of the complaint. The matter came before the Full Court but, it appearing to that court that the case involved questions as to the powers of the Commonwealth and the State *inter se,* the hearing was adjourned in contemplation of a removal of the case to the High Court of Australia.

On May 8, 1973, the Chief Justice of the High Court made an order removing the case into the High Court. The High Court reached certain conclusions on the questions of law involved and remitted the case to the Supreme Court for any necessary determination of certain other questions involved in the case. The Supreme Court in due course remitted the matter for further hearing before the magistrate. After further hearing, the magistrate on May 31, 1974, made an. order that the defendant be committed to gaol for 28 days in default of payment of the arrears sought in the complaint. The order for imprisonment was suspended while the defendant paid the sum of 50c a week off the arrears and paid the current maintenance, namely $10 a week. The defendant did not comply with this order but appealed to the Supreme Court.

The appeal came before Mr. Justice Zelling on August 14, 1974. Mr. Justice Zelling thought that there may be a question whether the State of South Australia could legislate to enforce what are Federal orders, the Commonwealth setting out the method and no other means, and advised Mr. Rooney to go to the Australian Legal Aid Office for legal advice. The Australian Legal Aid Office apparently granted Mr. Rooney assistance and acted for him in the negotiations which followed with the State Crown Law Office acting on behalf of the Community Welfare Department. The negotiations were protracted. In the meantime, the second child attained the age of 16 years. Mrs. Collison indicated to the department that she did not wish to continue the proceedings for reasons which she set out in a letter to the department. This brought the matter to an end so far as the Community Welfare Department was concerned, and it indicated to the Crown Law Department that Mrs. Collison no longer desired to pursue the matter. An officer of the Crown Law Department thereupon communicated with an officer of the Australian Legal Aid Office by telephone and discussed the machinery for carrying out Mrs. Collison's instructions. The State Crown Solicitor subsequently wrote to the Officer in Charge of the Australian Legal Aid Office in the following terms:

I refer to recent telephone conversations between Mr. Bell of this office and Miss Purcell. My instructions are now such that should Mr. Rooney withdraw his Supreme Court appeal the Department of Community Welfare would take no action to enforce the sentence of imprisonment ordered by the late Mr. Humby, S.M. Your earliest intimation that Mr. Rooney will abandon his appeal in return for such an undertaking would be appreciated. ,

I think that it is unfortunate that the matter was expressed in this way. In fact, there could be no question of enforcing the sentence of imprisonment, as Mrs. Collison had instructed the department that she did not wish any further proceedings to be taken and this was well known to the Australian Legal Aid Office. It was unfortunate that the undertaking not to enforce the order was expressed as being conditional upon the abandonment of the appeal. Nevertheless, the real position is quite clear and the Crown Law officers acted in good faith throughout.

Decisions of the Australian Legal Aid Office are not my responsibility. It appears however that the Australian Legal Aid Office took the view that, as Mr. Rooney was. no longer required to pay the arrears and was not in jeopardy of imprisonment, there was no basis for the continuance of legal aid.. Legal .aid was therefore discontinued. I must say that I agree with this decision. It would seem to me to be quite wrong that taxpayers' money should be used to finance appeals on. questions of law which are purely academic as far as the assisted, person is concerned.

I think that the House should be aware of the background to this matter. Mr. Rooney's case has been; sponsored throughout by the Divorce Law Reform Association, of which Mr. George Romeyko is President. The Divorce Law Reform Association has publicly indicated that its purpose is to frustrate by every available means the enforcement of maintenance orders against husbands. It has claimed at times to have an escape route by which husbands can escape from the State in order to avoid their lawful obligations under maintenance orders. In latter times, Mr. Romeyko and the association have resorted to raising points of law in maintenance cases with the object of having those points of law referred to the highest courts of appeal and of bringing the enforcement of maintenance orders to a standstill until the points are resolved. Mr. Romeyko has not hesitated to state that it is his intention to continue to raise such points for that purpose. .On the first occasion on which a point was raised in Rooney's case, magistrates all over the State refrained from enforcing maintenance orders for many months until the point was resolved.

This caused very great hardship to a great many wives and children who were deprived of maintenance during that period of time. Our system of law provides many safeguards for genuine litigants to ensure that justice is

administered according to law. This necessarily involves a hierarchy of appeal courts. This system can be manipulated by people who are not genuinely seeking a determination of a particular case according to law but are rather seeking to frustrate the general administration of the law or of some particular law of which they disapprove. In former times, the costs involved in this kind of tactic were a formidably inhibiting factor. The advent and general availability of legal aid has introduced a new element into our system of justice. It is important to ensure that legal aid is provided for people who would otherwise be denied access to justice. It is also important to ensure that it does not become an additional weapon in the hands of those who seek to use the courts and the legal system to frustrate the enforcement of lawful obligations. Although I think one aspect of the handling of this matter may be open to criticism on technical grounds, as indicated above, I believe that in substance the attitude and course of action of both the State authorities and the Australian Legal Aid Office are entirely justified.

COUNTRY NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

Mr. CHAPMAN: Will the Premier consider widening the spread of benefits of paid Government advertising among members of the provincial press and thus help country newspaper proprietors, many of whom claim to be on the breadline? These people also claim (apparently, with an abundance of supporting evidence) that, while they are being used by the Government to spread free departmental publicity, they are denied a fair share of paid advertising. A recent example brought to my notice was publicity on "stop" sign legislation. The Minister of Transport, or perhaps his department, had first sought to insert details in the metropolitan media by paying for the advertisements, but afterwards sought the co-operation of several country newspapers to spread the word by a system of unpaid news items. It is considered by these people that this request, linked with the requests of the Royal Automobile Association and other concerned parties, is placing what they describe as an unfair burden on country newspaper enterprises. Some country readers who depend mainly on their local newspaper are being denied real publicity on important matters on which they should be properly informed and, accordingly, on behalf of those readers, country newspapers are seeking a fair go in this regard. Government advertising on matters concerned with the Electoral Act is another classic example: the location of polling booths is left to the good graces of the country press, often without payment. Information has also been directed to my notice of a practice of the Minister of Education in inserting in the metropolitan media long lists of centres associated with the learn-to-swim campaign but, thereafter, apparently expecting (and taking for granted) that the country press will, without payment, disperse all information concerning the respective country districts.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I have not had any recent approach from the country press on this matter. I think that for about three years the country press, which has an association with an office in Adelaide, has not approached me concerning Government advertising. We try to be fair in respect of the advertising policies followed by the Government, and we certainly provide the press with a considerable service in making Government information available. Members of the country press have expressed their appreciation of that service, which is essential to their readers, because country people should know of Government activities that affect them. The Country Press Association is, I am sure, capable of taking up the matter with the Government if it has something specific to discuss. I do not know whether the honourable member was instructed by Mr. Power, but I saw him recently, and I think that the Country Press Association could approach me directly if it wished to complain, and we should be pleased to receive members of the association if they had a complaint.

MODBURY BUS SERVICE

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Minister of Transport consider rerouting the Municipal Tramways Trust bus service in the Tea Tree Gully district to service a retirement village under construction and also partly occupied at Ramsay Avenue (off Smart Road), Modbury? The overall plan is to build 150 independent units for elderly people, and the project has attracted an Australian Government grant made under the Aged Persons Homes Act. Voluntary organisations involved are Elderly Citizens Homes of South Australia Incorporated and the Rotary Club.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I shall be pleased to have the request examined.

"STOP" SIGNS

Dr. TONKIN: Will the Minister of Transport initiate an urgent inquiry into the possible dangers to road safety that now exist at road intersections where any "stop" signs installed cannot be identified from other parts of the intersection? This matter was referred to in the House, I think last week, but it seems that a real danger has arisen because people approaching some intersections cannot see whether or not motor vehicles on other parts of the intersection are being controlled by "stop" signs. I have seen dangerous situations arise since the law has been changed, and many similar instances have been reported to me. To give a specific instance, I refer to the intersection of Kensington Road with Gurney Road and Sydenham Road. For traffic proceeding east along Kensington Road with the driver looking to his right to Gurney Road, it is impossible for him to see the "stop" sign until his vehicle is almost into the intersection. Although that situation may not be bad, it causes some hazards to traffic flow. The situation concerning the other direction, with vehicles travelling west along Kensington Road, is that the driver cannot see the "stop" sign on Sydenham Road, because it is hidden behind a tree, and he is not aware whether or not the intersection is controlled by a "stop" sign. Therefore, the driver stops to give way to traffic on his right, not knowing that it is controlled by a "stop" sign, whereas another vehicle will continue because the driver, with his knowledge, knows that the "stop" sign is there. In the past few days I have seen several near misses at that intersection. As this sort of situation must arise at other intersections, I think it presents a real danger to road safety.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Last week I indicated, in reply to a question, that this matter was being very carefully studied by the Road Traffic Board. Neither I nor anyone else would deny that difficulties are involved in the present interpretation of the "stop" sign law. However, if the honourable member will be patient for a little while longer I think the Government will be able to make an announcement that should solve this problem.

LAND TAX

Mr. RUSSACK: Will the Treasurer make available the result of the analysis carried out on rural land tax levied for 1973-74 and also an estimate of land tax levied for 1974-75 on land used for primary production? In reply to a question asked by me in October last year concerning

rural land tax, the Treasurer said an analysis of land tax levied for 1973-74 would not be available until late November. As it is now three months since the analysis was to be completed, I ask that the relevant information be made available, together with the estimate for the current year.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: A series of analyses has been prepared for the Government to consider the whole land tax position. I think that the honourable member will find, when the Land Tax Bill is introduced this session (as I expect it to be), that he will have a pleasant surprise and I shall be glad to give him more information at that time.

SHARK REPELLENT

Mr. BECKER: Will the Premier support a request from the South Australian Surf Lifesaving Association to allow a Sydney inventor to undertake experiments with a sonic shark repellent device? I refer to an article appearing in the *Sunday Mail* of March 9, 1975. I understand that a device invented by a Mr. Theo Brown can repel sharks by sending out a sonic signal that drives sharks away. As yet he has been unable to experiment successfully on the white pointer shark, which is common to South Australian waters, but he has tried it out successfully on other types of shark on the eastern coast. I understand that the Surf Lifesaving Association is concerned at the number of sharks prevalent in our waters, and I think all members are aware of the tremendous work members of the surf lifesaving movement do by chasing sharks away from the beaches in either their surf boats or in one of their two power boats. In view of the concern for safety of swimmers using our beaches, I ask whether the Government will approve this request to permit such an experiment to be carried out in this State.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am not aware of any basis for either our approval or disapproval or of anything that will stop the gentleman carrying out his experiments if he wishes to do so. However, as I am opening the surf lifesaving championships on Sunday I will discuss the request with the Surf Lifesaving Association then.

VERTEBRATE PESTS BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the control of vertebrate pests; to repeal the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, and the Wild Dogs Act, 1931-1970; to amend the Statute Law Revision Act, 1935, the Statute Law Revision Act, 1936, the Loans for Fencing and Water Piping Act, 1938-1973, and the Statutes Amendment (Dog Fence and Vermin) Act, 1964; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

This measure is intended to replace the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, and the Wild Dogs Act, 1931-1970, Acts providing for the same purpose, the control of vermin. These two Acts, although they have been amended over the years, are now outmoded. This Bill is intended to provide a more effective scheme for the control of vermin, referred to as vertebrate pests, and also a modern legislative expression of that purpose. The basic provision of this measure, as of the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, imposes a duty on the owner or occupier of any land to control vertebrate pests upon that land and, thereby, reduce the loss to agriculture and damage to the environment generally.

The Bill provides for establishment of an authority, called the Vertebrate Pests Control Authority, with a primary function of ensuring that landholders discharge that duty. For that purpose, the authority is empowered to appoint State authorized officers, who may inspect the control of vertebrate pests anywhere within the State. Councils are empowered to appoint local authorised officers, who are to inspect the control of vertebrate pests within the areas of their councils. The State authorised officers are intended to be concerned with areas both within and outside council areas. In relation to any land, where a State authorised officer is satisfied that the owner or occupier of any land has not adequately controlled vertebrate pests, he may give a notice to the owner or occupier requiring him to control the vertebrate pests. As under the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, a person given such a notice may have the notice reviewed by the Minister. If a person fails to comply with a notice, he will be guilty of an offence, and the authority is empowered to carry out the terms of the notice and recover the cost of so doing.

At the local government level the Government is aware that there have been problems relating to enforcement, and it is in this aspect that this measure departs from the approach under the Vermin Act, 1931-1967. One basic problem has been lack of information at the central level about the degree and distribution of infestation by vertebrate pests within the State. Accordingly, provision is made requiring councils to supply such information to the authority in relation to their areas, and the authority will receive such information from its own officers in relation to the rest of the State. In addition, the central body, the authority, is intended to play a larger role in enforcement within local government areas, with local authorised officers being empowered to give only warning notices to defaulting landholders.

A duplicate of any warning notice is to be forwarded to the authority, and a State authorised officer may issue his usual notice to a landholder failing to heed a warning notice. This approach should reduce the burden on. local government and achieve a more uniform pattern of enforcement. As under the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, the central body, in this measure, the authority, is empowered to take action against a defaulting council, subject to review by the Minister. In relation to a council that, for whatever reason, is ineffectively enforcing vertebrate pest control within its area, the Bill provides in addition that such a council may, if it is able to reach agreement with neighbouring councils, request the establishment of a board comprised of persons representative of itself and such other councils as agree to take part.

A board so established would take over from the participating councils the enforcement of this measure within their areas, enabling the cost of such enforcement to be shared. Where an arrangement of this nature is not entered into voluntarily, it may, under the Bill, be established by the authority, or the authority as a last resort may itself assume responsibility for enforcement of the measure within the area of the council and recover the costs thereby incurred. One basic change from the Vermin

Act, 1931-1967, involves the discontinuation of vermin boards. Vermin boards, with certain exceptions, have for some time ceased to effectively enforce vertebrate pest control within their vermin fenced districts, and this measure reflects that fact.

Vermin boards instead have been primarily concerned with maintenance of the part of the dog fence within their districts, and provision is made in a Bill, to be introduced, amending the Dog Fence Act, 1946-1969, for establishing boards similar to the vermin boards, but charged only with responsibilities relating to the dog fence. Provision is made in this Bill for payment by the authority of bounties for the destruction of dingoes and, for that purpose, provides for the imposition of a rate on land subject to infestation by dingoes, matters at present provided for by the Wild Dogs Act, 1931-1970. To consider the Bill in some detail: clause 1 is formal, and clause 2 provides that the measure will come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. Clause 3 sets out the arrangement of the measure. Clause 4 provides for the repeal of the Acts making up the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, and the Wild Dogs Act, 1931-1970.

Clause 5 sets out the definitions used in the Bill. Attention is drawn to the definition of "control", the basic concept for the purposes of the Bill, and the definition of "dingo", a term used in preference to the term "wild dog". Clause 6 is substantially the same as section 16 of the Vermin Act, 1931-1967. Clause 7 formally establishes the Vertebrate Pests Control Authority. Clause 8 provides for the membership of the authority, and clauses 9 and 10 deal with the term and conditions of office and payment for office as a member of the authority. Clause 11 regulates meetings of the authority. Clause 12 validates certain acts of the authority, and provides immunity from personal liability for acts of its members done in good faith. Clause 13 makes provision for execution of documents by the authority. The functions of the authority are set out in clause 14, and include the administration of the measure, the control of vertebrate pests upon Crown lands, a research, co-ordinating and advisory role relating to vertebrate pest control, and the collation of information relating to vertebrate pests within the State. These functions may be delegated in the usual manner.

Clause 15 provides that the authority is to be subject to the general control and direction of the Minister. Clause 16 makes provision for staffing of the authority. While it is contemplated that most of the staff will be employed under the Public Service Act, at subclause (4) provision is made for employment of persons otherwise than under that Act. Clause 17 provides for the moneys required for the purposes of the Act. Clauses 18 and 19 make provision for a rate, Government subsidy, and the continuation of the Wild Dogs Fund under the name Dingo Control Fund, all, in substance, unchanged from the provisions of the Wild Dogs Act, 1931-1970. Clause 18 also makes provision for the fund to be applied in the payment of the bounty for dingoes, and for any other purpose relating to the control of dingoes.

Clauses 20 and 21 provide borrowing and investment powers. Clause 22 requires the authority to keep proper accounts and for these accounts to be audited. Clause 23 provides for an annual report of the authority. The authority is empowered under clause 24 to appoint State authorised officers, and a council is required under clause 25 to appoint a local authorised officer. Local authorised officers, by virtue of subclause (2) of clause 25, may exercise the powers of an authorised officer, set out in clause 26, only in relation to their councils' areas. Clause 27 provides the usual protection for the authorised officers in their personal capacity. Clause 28 imposes the duty on owners or occupiers of land to control vertebrate pests upon that land and upon certain adjoining land, as is the case under the Vermin Act, 1931-1967, and provides for the enforcement of that duty by means of warning notices given by local authorised officers and notices given by State authorised officers, failure to comply with the latter notices being an offence. Provision is made in this clause for review by the Minister of a notice given by a State authorised officer.

Clause 29 provides that the occupier of any land should ensure that no-one keeps vertebrate pests upon that land and, if he fails to do so, he is guilty of an offence. Clause 30 exempts persons from compliance with the measure in the case of zoos, circuses or research institutions keeping any vertebrate pest, or any person keeping one cage of rabbits. Clause 31 makes it an offence to sell rabbits and other vertebrate pests, but exempts sales by zoos, circuses, or research institutions. Clauses 32 and 33 make it an offence to let a vertebrate pest loose or to import a vertebrate pest into any island within the State. Clauses 34 and 35 provide for offences relating to dog-proof or rabbit-proof fences. All these offences are substantially the same as offences created under the Vermin Act, 1931-1967.

Clause 36 sets out the duties of councils under this measure, namely, to prosecute offences against the measure, to cause inspections to be made of vertebrate pest control and to keep certain records. Clause 37, providing for council finance for this measure, is the same as the corresponding provision in the Vermin Act, 1931-1967. A council is required by clause 38 to keep accounts and records relating to this measure. Clause 39 empowers councils to carry out vertebrate pest control work for a fee, the council often being best equipped to carry out this work in its area. Clause 40 provides for establishment of a board, upon the request of two or more neighbouring councils, to carry out the duties of those councils under this measure.

Clause 41 makes provision for the authority to give a council a notice, requiring the council to cause inspections to be made of vertebrate pest control in its area, or to furnish information relating to the species, numbers, and distribution and control of vertebrate pests within its area, the notice being subject to review by the Minister. Clause 42 provides that the authority may carry out the terms of a notice not complied with, and recover the cost from the defaulting landholder or council, as the case may be. Clause 43 provides that the authority may pay a subsidy to a council for cost incurred or to be incurred by the council in relation to vertebrate pest control, the Minister having this power under the present Vermin Act, 1931-1967. Clause 44 empowers the authority to recommend the establishment of a board comprised of two or more councils to carry out the duties of those councils under this measure.

Such a recommendation may be made under subclause (2), if the authority considers one or more of the councils is, for whatever reason, not adequately discharging its duties under this measure. Alternatively, in the case of such a council, the authority may under clause 45 take over from the council the responsibility of enforcing the measure within the area of the council and recover from the council the cost of so doing. Clause 46 provides that the owners or occupiers of land inside and adjoining the dog fence may lay poison or set traps on land outside the dog fence on giving notice to the owner or occupier of that land. Clause 47 replaces several provisions in the

Vermin Act, 1931-1967, providing for contribution towards the cost of rabbit-proof or dog-proof fencing by adjoining landholders.

It is intended that this matter be regulated under the new measure relating to contribution for fencing costs, and clause 47 provides that, where a dispute occurs relating to such contribution, the authority may, by providing the appropriate document, settle any question before a court as to whether a rabbit-proof or dog-proof fence is an appropriate fence in the circumstances. Clause 48 provides for the service of notices, and clause 49 is an evidentiary provision. Clauses 50 and 51 are formal provisions relating to proceedings for offences. Clause 52 empowers the making of regulations, including regulations relating to the supply and use of poisons for vertebrate pest control.

Mr. ALLEN secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONTROL OF WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Control of Waters Act, 1919-1925. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

This short Bill makes a small number of metric and decimal currency amendments to the principal Act and, more importantly, ensures that regard may be had to certain environmental considerations by the Minister when he considers certain mailers under the principal Act. To consider the Bill in some detail: Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 makes a metric amendment to section 2 of the principal Act by converting one acre to .5 hectares. This represents a slight increase in area, a hectare being a little more than two acres. This expression occurs in the definition of "domestic purposes" in that section, and it is self-explanatory. Paragraph (*b*) of this clause makes a formal amendment.

Clause 3 amends section 8 of the principal Act and again converts one acre to .5 hectares. Clause 4 inserts a new section 14a in the principal Act which enjoins the Minister, when he is considering a matter under section 11 or 14 of the Act, to pay regard to certain environmental considerations and, in effect, permits the Minister to refuse his permission if the considers that there is any substantial danger to the environment. Sections 11 and 14 of the principal Act deal with permission to drain land, and the reason for ensuring that environmental considerations are taken into account in this area is, amongst other things, to have regard to a motion of the House of Assembly passed on October 17, 1973. For the convenience of members I set out this motion, as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, substantial areas of remaining wet-lands in South Australia should be reserved for the conservation of wildlife, and where possible former wet-lands should be rehabilitated.

It is suggested that intended new section 14a is self-explanatory, in that it enables the Minister to have regard to environmental and other factors and further to impose conditions to any permission he does give in relation to drainage, so long as those conditions are related to environmental matters. Clause 5 amends section 22 of the principal Act, which provides penalties, by increasing these penalties quite substantially and, at the same time, converts them to decimal currency.

Mr. RODDA secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (AMALGAMATIONS)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 19. Page 2454.)

Mr. WARDLE (Murray): I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill, which I believe will help in an important area of our lives as citizens in our local community as we have become accustomed to it. From observations in a few parts of the world, I believe it is important for the local community to have a local government authority. When we look at local councils in South Australia, it is obvious that we have always lacked many of the powers that local government has had in many other English-speaking countries. The tragedy of this is that during the past 20 years local government has been losing one by one many of the powers it once had. I do not think it wanted to but it has not been able to avoid losing local power. I think probably this Bill is all about local government regaining some of that authority and power, because it will find itself in a better position financially and in a better position in relation to manpower expertise, and this can do nothing but good. Local government should regain at least some of the strength it has lost over the years.

It has been said that few changes have taken place in local government over the past 40 years, and I think this is probably one of the reasons why we find ourselves in this difficult situation today where local government cannot cope adequately with the situation because many councils are limited financially and in their ability to acquire suitable manpower. It is obvious that, if a system has not changed to keep abreast of changing circumstances over 40 years, many difficulties are now being encountered. At first sight this appears to be an advantage of the Bill, because it makes it easier to change council boundaries. Many councils in the past have been reluctant to suggest changes. Where two councils have been spilling over into each other, neither council wishes to give away any of its area. The council into which a corporate town is growing is therefore eager to receive the additional income from the more closely settled areas. Councils in that situation believe that their boundaries should be extended in order to give them greater authority over their closer fringe areas.

In many parts of South Australia this competitive situation seems to have arisen, and councils do not wish to give away authority or, indeed, their very existence. I believe the best solution for- all involved would be for the councils concerned to surrender and combine their areas thus making a more viable council area. This Bill may help councils to do this. The Royal Commission could meet with representatives from adjoining council areas and could instil common sense, good planning and forward thinking into the group. The group could arrive at a decision that' would be of advantage to the Commission and the councils concerned. This measure might be advantageous not only to the councils concerned but also to many other councils.

Tn his second reading explanation, the Minister has told members how councils can change their boundaries. Fundamentally, that is what the Bill is all about. It would be wise to retain the services, experience and talents of members of the Royal Commission so as to guide and encourage councils into amalgamating or into transferring parts of their areas into other council areas.

The idea seems to be abroad in the community that this Bill repeals all other methods of unifying council areas. However, I hasten to add that this measure is purely another means by which council areas can be amalgamated.

In this respect much was said in this place when the report of the Select Committee was tabled only a few days ago. It was obvious from what members said that it was increasingly important to strengthen and help councils wherever we can. That help might be by way of finance or by the provision of manpower. This measure has been designed in the long term to deal with the powers of councils. I believe it is essential that councils should be strengthened, not weakened.

Earlier I referred to the period of my interest in council, affairs. Over that 20 years there have been many areas in which councils have lost their authority and their powers. At the end of the Second World War councils were fulfilling most of the functions for which they were established. However, since then it has not been the same. The situation has changed because of the inability of councils to have the manpower and money to service most of the responsibilities normally regarded as theirs. Some Stale Government departments have infringed on this responsibility and authority and have taken from councils some of the powers and services they were used to providing. There are many ways in which councils have been left to do much ground work in furnishing information and statistics relating to powers that have been given to the Government. However, councils were still requested to carry out work for State Government departments only to lose the responsibility or authority they possessed. Indeed, some areas of responsibility have been taken back into State Government functions. The State Health Department now sends inspectors into unsewered council areas to inspect septic tanks. Surely, this type of work could be. done on site by a qualified council inspector who had local knowledge of the area and of the people. I do not accept the suggestion that council health inspectors are not of sufficiently high calibre to. do this work. To suggest that would be indeed foolish, because such people are qualified and can perform the task.

Dr. Tonkin: Local government is not only losing functions to the State Government: it will lose out to the Commonwealth Government, too.

Mr. WARDLE: Yes. My colleague has expressed a fear that has been in the minds of council officers for some time. Councils will continue to lose their powers not only to State Governments but also to the Commonwealth Government. The cycle is not yet complete. There is the danger of regionalisation and federalism centring its authority in Canberra, and council and State powers could finish up there. Councils have passed over to the State Government powers relating to inspection and supervision in relation to weeds and vermin, weights and measures, town planning, library facilities, traffic control, abattoirs, swimming pools and zoning (to mention only a few), because of council inability to cope adequately with the situation. Regarding the significant and important matter (although it may seem small) of weights and measures, I was involved in a situation where a council did not have the time to do this work thoroughly, probably because it did not have the money to pay the additional officer who would carry out the inspection work. Perhaps' most of these powers that have been surrendered have had to be surrendered because councils have lacked the funds to employ staff with the expertise and qualifications to carry out those functions.

I am sure that some matters dealt with in the Bill will be discussed in Committee, and probably the percentages and things of that kind are matters of personal opinion. If one asked all councils what percentage of people they considered should have the right to ask for a poll, one probably would get a variety of answers, ranging from 5 per cent to 50' per cent or 60 per cent, and probably it is this Parliament's duty to try to fix a percentage that will cater for the minority groups.

Those who have been involved in local government know that some minority groups are difficult to please and are never satisfied about anything that the council does in the area. Sometimes one would wonder whether these groups were just anti-council and wanted to agitate. I suppose that there is a nuisance value involved in allowing too small a percentage to demand a poll, and one could ask why a small percentage of ratepayers should be able to put a council to the expense of conducting a poll.

I support the Bill wholeheartedly. In addition to the provision now in the Local Government Act for areas to be added to or taken from existing areas, there will be a provision for round-table conferences. This provision will be helpful and the Royal Commission, councils, ratepayers, and ratepayers' meetings will be able to try to work out a more favourable position for the amalgamation of council areas.

I am interested in the provisions of clause 8 in regard to a council not being party to the amalgamation where the proposal does not affect the council area. It seems that no attempt has been made to provide for part of a council area to be considered: only the total area will be considered. The Bill is an important measure of which advantage can be taken. I consider that councils will make good use of the provisions and thereby become stronger.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I support the Bill. We must realise that it results from the recommendations of the Select Committee, the report of which has been debated in this House. The Bill streamlines procedures so that the Royal Commission will be able to carry out . its duties. However, we must consider some aspects to ensure that there will be fair opportunity for both points of view to be expressed. The emphasis should be on voluntary adjustment, and a large area should not be able to swamp a smaller area unless there are the necessary safeguards for democratic approval by the persons concerned. As I have stated previously, some areas could have their boundaries adjusted, with much advantage to themselves. I refer to councils in some country areas, particularly some corporations and surrounding district councils.

If the Royal Commission is to be able to carry out the desires expressed in the Select Committee report and in the debate on the motion to note that report (in which several members, on both sides spoke), we must ensure that the legislative machinery is available. I am sure that the Royal Commission is the proper authority to do the work, because it can use the experience that it has gained during the extensive and extended hearings and it also can have regard to the points of view that have been expressed to the Select Committee.

I will deal only with the main features of the Bill, particularly clauses 7 and 8, because the other provisions are fairly formal. I understand that the proposed provision will apply only while the Royal Commission is in operation and while it can carry out the functions that this Parliament has referred to it and the other terms of reference that it has not yet been able to consider. The matter of boundaries must be completed before the Commission can complete the other part of its task. I emphasise that the provisions already in the Act dealing with this matter will remain. Other amendments will be

introduced soon and, the sooner we get them in and get the principal Act reprinted, the better. At present the Act is most unwieldy and difficult to follow. Much of what is in the present legislation is out of date. From the point of view of the general philosophy involved in this matter, we must have regard to the basic importance of local government in our community. We must ensure that it works properly to the benefit of people in the various council areas. I hope that all members want to see local government play its proper role in the governmental structure of our community. The reports of the Royal Commission and the Select Committee refer to rather damaging alternatives, if the local government system should fail. I am indebted to the member for Murray for pointing out the reference to regions. In its report, the Royal Commission favoured voluntary regions rather than compulsory regions. I hope that members bear that in mind, because that is not the sort of procedure applying at present. The Commonwealth Government now makes grants to certain councils.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to try to confine his remarks to the contents of the Bill.

Mr. COUMBE: Most councils in South Australia are doing an excellent job; I pay tribute to them. However, some councils are handicapped, perhaps because of the area they must cover or the poor return they receive from rate revenue. For these reasons, they cannot attract officers of the right calibre to their areas to conduct their affairs. They are also hampered in other ways.

Mr. Millhouse: Which councils can't attract proper officers?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COUMBE: I invite the honourable member to read the report of the evidence given to the Select Committee.

Mr. Millhouse: You won't name any.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Mitcham.

Mr. COUMBE: Although I believe the Bill is necessary, several improvements can be made to it with advantage. Clause 8 incorporates new Division IX, dealing with alteration of areas by the agreement of councils. Under this provision, two or more councils can agree to certain proposals. The agreement of two or more councils is a prerequisite. Unless they agree, proposals for any adjustment, amalgamation, annexure, or other changes are simply not on. The nub of the matter is that the councils must agree.

We all know that two or more councils will be agreeing to proposals affecting the constitution of the areas concerned. When the Constitution Act is altered in this Parliament, an absolute majority of members is necessary. In some provisions of local government, only half the members of the council need be present. As the proposals we are considering are so important, this does not seem good enough. I submit that we should consider providing for an absolute majority. I now refer to new section 45a (3), which provides for a notice of objection to be lodged within a month. We are attempting to do away with the method of petitioning councils. At present, certain criteria are laid down relating to these petitions, with requirements varying from 50 signatures to 100 signatures, and so on. In the Bill, the notice must be given by 20 per cent of the ratepayers in an area, whereas the Act presently provides for 10 per cent. I believe that a figure of 15 per cent is reasonable in relation to the number of ratepayers necessary to demand a poll.

New section 45a (4) is an important provision. The wording of this new subsection is almost the same as that in the present Act. When a poll is held in an area, ratepayers entitled to vote should all have a vote. The wording of new subsection (4) is ambiguous; I should like the provision to be perfectly clear so that there can be no mistake. Although I understand that some consultations on the matter have taken place, I should like the position clarified. When two or more councils are involved in an alteration to a boundary and a poll is to take place, I believe the poll in each area should take place on the same day. Before any alteration can occur, the majority of ratepayers in each area concerned should agree to the proposal. That procedure would be fair and democratic. This poll will take place after the Royal Commission has made recommendations to certain councils and after the councils have held meetings, eventually deciding to make a certain change. Therefore, the council in each area must agree.

This will be the biggest hurdle to get over. If the councils agree, I am fairly certain that most ratepayers will accept the decision, especially in closely-knit communities. When stirrers and people with parochial interests are involved, there will be difficulty in some areas. Up to four or five councils may be concerned with a decision. From memory, I think that the Royal Commission referred to seven councils being involved in the Meadows council area. Once the councils have agreed, the opportunity will exist for anyone who objects to the proposal to organise and lodge a protest, so long as he has the support of, I suggest, 15 per cent of ratepayers in the areas concerned.

If a sufficient number objects to the adjustment and demands a poll, it must be held, but when it is held it should be held over the whole area. There should be separate polls in each area but they should be held simultaneously, and, unless the question is carried by a majority in each area, the proposition should fail. In essence, as members of the council have a say and, finally, ratepayers also have their say, there will be two safeguards against any exploitation. Probably, in most areas amalgamation can take place without recourse to some of the provisions of new subsection (4). I realise that councils on the West Coast, except those at Port Lincoln, agree and there is nothing to stop them from going ahead. Also the corporation of Victor Harbor and the District Council of Encounter Bay could proceed without any trouble. At this stage I support the Bill, which I will possibly seek to improve in Committee.

Mr. McANANEY (Heysen): I opposed many parts of the original Bill, but also stated that, if it were not passed, local government would finish up in a bit of a mess. The more I read of what council members are saying and of the attitudes expressed in some areas, the more I think that we have adopted the wrong approach. First, the Government and the Minister were weak in giving in to the demands of city councils, some of which are not viable propositions. If ratepayers had been able to vote on the proposals of the Royal Commission, there would have been a better decision. Members of the council at Strathalbyn are completely logical, but provisions in the old Act were not used. In its report the Commission suggested amalgamation: not one person in the area objected, and at a meeting not all councillors attended to protest to me at the decision. It is possible that at council meetings

discussions may centre on minor matters, such as swimming pools and cemeteries, and the question of amalgamation may not be considered properly. If councils do not agree, it is possible that no changes will be made, even though 99 per cent of people living in the area do not object. In Strathalbyn, people living inside the town area will have a vested interest and may demand a poll, whereas those living outside this area may not trouble to vote, but, if they think that rates will be increased, they will vote against the change. I hope I am not correct in my surmise, but the evidence is there to see at present.

We should proceed with this Bill, but I have fears of the possible results. Many small pockets of people want to leave one council and join another and, as districts are developed, some adjustments may have to be made. I remember an incident some years ago when a group wished to leave the Meadows council and join the Strathalbyn council. Everyone signed the petition but, because of a technicality, it was not accepted and was returned by the Minister. However, by that time the driving force behind the petition had left the district, and nothing further was done. The present situation would have been much better if, after the report of the Royal Commission had been brought down, people could have objected to it there and then. The legislation provides for a vote over the whole council area, but some people will still not be able to obtain what they want.

Mr. RUSSACK (Gouger): I support the Bill, the important aspects of which have been referred to by previous speakers. The House agreed to and accepted the report of the Select Committee, part of which approved introducing legislation to streamline amalgamations or annexations of councils where it was agreed to by the councillors concerned, after consulting and discussing the matter with the Royal Commission. There is a need to alter boundaries in many areas of South Australia. This was revealed in the report of the Royal Commission and in evidence given to the Select Committee. Although many councils would accept the need for change, they could not agree to some of the boundary allocations as set out in the report of the Commission and in the original Bill. After discussions with the Royal Commission, I am confident that there will be an acceptance of various new boundaries and that there will generally be a desirable outcome. Having been a member of the Select Committee, I believe much good will come out of consultation between the Royal Commission and councils. Before voting on the Select Committee's final report, I sought its acceptance of the provision for boundaries not necessarily conforming to either the first or second report of the Royal Commission or to the Bill. In other words, after discussions have taken place, boundaries can be decided that may be vastly different from but far better than those originally proposed.

This Bill does not repeal any existing sections of the Local Government Act but, where two or more councils have agreed and the Royal Commission concurs, the procedures outlined in the Bill can be adopted. I have personally contacted councils in order to ascertain their thoughts on the Bill, and my findings have been varied and most interesting. However, I consider that most councils accept being able to make a voluntary decision, and that provision is of. paramount importance. In addition, not only councillors blit also ratepayers themselves will have an opportunity to express an opinion on the matter. I believe some of the clauses are restrictive and may require amendment. Whilst it is not appropriate at this stage to comment on any amendments, I know that some have been distributed, and I am interested in examining them. Although I do not support the Bill in its entirety, I support the second reading, hoping that some amendments will be accepted in the Committee stage.

Mr. CHAPMAN (Alexandra):. I support the Bill, and I do so on the principle I have referred to in this House during previous debates on proposed changes to council boundaries. This is the final stage of providing the machinery for councils, on behalf of their ratepayers, to amalgamate where desired locally, with the assistance of the Royal Commission. I believe that this is a desirable outcome of a lengthy and expensive exercise by the Government. It has spent a fortune investigating local government throughout the State, and there is no doubt that some of their findings are desirable. The machinery is now designed to allow the implementation of desired amalgamations. I am pleased that those councils outside the ambit of this measure can continue in their own right as local government identities. They will not be encouraged or directed to amalgamate as was previously insisted on by the Minister in his original Bill. Further, the Bill streamlines the Local Government Act for the purpose of allowing annexation of parts of council areas to neighbouring council areas, as well as the amalgamation of the whole of two or more council areas.

The member for Heysen referred briefly to a case in my district involving the Corporation of the Town of Victor Harbor and the District Council of Encounter Bay. He said he believed it would have been desirable to adopt the original recommendation of the Royal Commission, but I cannot agree with the honourable member in relation to the Goolwa and Port Elliot area involved in that proposal; indeed, the desires of the council and most of its ratepayers were acknowledged by the Minister immediately after the Royal Commission's report was received. I am proud to say that I fully supported the council's maintaining its own identity and, accordingly, I cannot agree with the member for Heysen.

Mr. McAnaney: Quote what I said!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CHAPMAN: I support the amalgamation of the Corporation of the Town of Victor Harbor with the District Council of Encounter Bay. As the honourable member for Heysen has said, the two councils have for many years been thinking of amalgamating.

Mr. Mathwin: He was very naughty!

Mr. CHAPMAN: I do not know whether or not he was naughty; he was expressing an opinion.

Mr. McAnaney: You should quote me correctly.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Heysen has been here long enough to know that he cannot interject when he is out of his seat. If he continues to do so, Standing Orders will prevail, and he will suffer the consequences.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I do not know whether the member for Heysen was being naughty; he was expressing his views on his memory of the situation, and he is entitled to do that. However, I cannot agree to those views. I support the amalgamation of the Victor Harbor and Encounter Bay councils, and I support the provisions in this measure for streamlining the Local Government Act, including the provision under which councils can be assisted by the Royal Commission, for that is vital to amalgamation. In the proposed amalgamation of two or more councils, it is essential that a third party be involved, not only to advise

the councils concerned but also to lay down guidelines on details of districts. In my view, it would be disastrous for councils themselves to initiate decisions on the number of councillors that should serve on an amalgamated council.

It would be equally disastrous for existing councillors to set about delineating ward boundaries in the proposed total area. In the interests of ratepayers and councillors, councils should be guided and assisted by the Royal Commission in determining which site or sites should be used as council meeting places when councils have amalgamated. The only provision in the Bill that disturbs me relates to employees who, irrespective of how many councils amalgamate, may be moved to another area or be left without employment. What worries me is how members of council staffs can be assured of future employment. The Minister has promised on several occasions that such officers need have no fears that they will be retrenched; he has promised, in fact,, that senior staff members will be protected. However, I am aware that certain senior clerical officers are still concerned about whether they will be absorbed in their present council area or whether they will be transferred elsewhere. It is in the interests of those people that I ask the Minister to clarify his earlier statements and to reassure those people that they will be absorbed, where possible, in their own council areas or at least be guided as to their future employment.

I am not willing at this lime to agree to all the clauses in the Bill but, as has been stated by other members, every effort will be made later to improve the situation in that regard. I support the Minister's intentions regarding this measure wherein assistance will be given to councils to amalgamate where those councils and their ratepayers desire amalgamation.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): This measure results from the deliberations of a Select Committee, which performed a most useful function in that, if it did nothing else, it served to educate the Minister of Local Government, and that is a fairly difficult task. The Minister seemed to be quite intractable in his views on how council amalgamation should take place. The history of this matter is interesting. The Minister tried to make arbitrary changes to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Fortunately, as a result of deliberations of the Select Committee he has seen how unwise and unpopular were his original proposals. This measure is desirable, as it ensures that the considerable efforts of the Royal Commission will not be wasted. We all know that the Commission did much good work, although it was a fairly expensive inquiry, and it would be a shame if the results of that work were to be lost completely. This Bill is far better than the Bill the Minister originally tried to implement. I am now receiving letters from constituents thanking me for the efforts made by the Opposition, especially the efforts I made in my own district, in ensuring that the original Bill was withdrawn.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Have you received anything signed "Teusner"?

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: No, although that gentleman addressed a letter to a meeting at Tanunda, in which he expressed his personal views on the measure. It would be a shame if the Royal Commission were to be stopped in its tracks.' Under the Bill, the Commission's recommendations may be valuable, acting as. a basis of councils' amalgamating. The Bill, however, seems to have some weaknesses, to which previous speakers in this debate have alluded. It does seem to me to de-emphasise the role played by ratepayers in any amalgamations that may occur. The machinery for amalgamation should place more emphasis on the will of ratepayers. It is possible that councils can be slacked and that people being elected to councils may have a certain purpose in mind, such as causing an amalgamation that may not reflect the majority view of ratepayers. However, as I have no intention of canvassing again the matters referred to by most Opposition speakers, I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 7 passed.

Clause 8—"Approved proposals."

Mr. COUMBE: I move:

In new section 45a to insert the following new subsection:

(la) For the purposes of this section, a council shall not be regarded as having agreed to a proposal to which subsection (1) relates unless its agreement is expressed in a resolution supported by the votes of an absolute majority of the total number of the members of the council.

The amendment would require the decision to be made by an absolute majority, not a simple majority. Under the Act at present, a simple majority, which could comprise half the number of members of the council, could carry a motion, and that would not truly reflect the opinion of a council on such a major matter as an alteration to the council area. I have taken the definition in section 5 of the principal Act, where it is provided that an absolute majority means a majority of the whole number of members of a council or committee, as the case may be. That provision means that at least one more than half must be involved in the decision. Under our Standing Orders, an absolute majority is required to amend the Constitution Act, and that is also required in other cases. Surely the same provision should apply to councils when they are deciding whether to alter the areas under their control. It would not be difficult for any council to get an absolute majority present.

Surely, when a major matter such as this was being dealt with, all members of the council, except those who were ill, would be present. A simple majority is not good enough, and I do not see any reason why the Government should object to this slight amendment. When a council has met the Royal Commissioners and other people, it should be able to make a decision, and this provision would regularise the position, not make it more difficult.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Local Government): The member for Torrens has said that this amendment would regularise the position, not make it more difficult. If that were so, there would be no point in the amendment. The plain fact is that the amendment is designed to stymie the work of the Royal Commission.

Mr. Coumbe: I deny that categorically.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Royal Commission could travel about 300 kilometres to discuss a proposal with a council at a meeting, and some members of the council could register their objection by staying away. A few weeks ago, when I brought down the report of the Select Committee, it was adopted unanimously, and I thought we were genuine in backing the Royal Commission. However, now we have an amendment that an absolute majority of the members of the council must support the decision. What is so sacrosanct about an absolute majority? We have not had much of this from the Opposition previously, and that was not the Opposition's attitude when I talked about the right of people to vote. .

Mr. McAnaney: You wanted an 80 per cent majority on the question of hours.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The matter of whether councils meet in the evening is not dealt with in this Bill. Although an absolute majority is required at the second reading and third reading stages of Bills to amend provisions in the Constitution Act, I do not think that that requirement makes it right, because many things in the Constitution Act of South Australia have been wrong for a long time. We have rectified some things, such as the provisions regarding the Legislative Council.

Mr. Chapman: Fair go!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am referring to the absolute majority requirement on that matter, because the member for Torrens has said that, if it is right to require an absolute majority to alter the Constitution of South Australia, it ought to be right also to require one to alter the constitution of a council. I do not think the point is worth pursuing. As the member for Torrens has said, when a matter of this kind was before a council all members of that council would regard it as their duty to be present. Frankly, I do not believe that we need a provision of this nature, as it would undoubtedly inhibit the influence of the Royal Commission, and I want to help the Commission as much as I can.

Mr. McANANEY: If a council of nine members divided on a decision, with five in favour and four against, that would be a decision by the absolute majority. However, the four councillors who opposed the decision could have stayed away, as they did not achieve anything by attending the meeting. What difference does it make whether two councillors or four councillors stay away if there is an absolute majority in favour present?

Mr. CHAPMAN: I support the amendment, about which there is nothing sinister or disturbing. In this case, we must protect the wishes of the ratepayers. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to require a decision to be made by an absolute majority of members of a council. Before a council area is changed, an absolute majority of the councillors should be required to indicate support. Thereafter public opinion should be relied on regarding whether or not councils amalgamate. Amendments to be moved later will clarify the situation.

Mr. RUSSACK: The Minister said that members of the Select Committee unanimously agreed to its report, and that is true. Paragraph 23 (*d*) of the recommendations of the committee states:

That a Bill be introduced providing that the procedures for boundary changes contained in Part II of the Local Government Act, 1934-1974, be simplified where boundary changes are agreed to by the councils involved after consultation with the Royal Commission, provided that ratepayers' rights to be involved in changes are protected.

As a member of that Select Committee, I agreed that a Bill should be introduced. However, as the rights of ratepayers must be protected, an absolute majority of councillors should vote on these proposals. The Minister implied that, if we passed this amendment, we would not indicate support to the Royal Commission. I suggest that a decision by an absolute majority of councillors would indicate to the Commission much greater support for its recommendation than would the decision of a simple majority of councillors. I support the amendment.

Mr. COUMBE: I strongly resent the Minister's implying that this amendment would make it difficult for the Royal Commission to carry out its work, and that it was a ploy by the Opposition.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: No.

Mr. COUMBE: That was the effect of what the Minister said. I categorically deny what the Minister has implied.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You'd better read *Hansard* and see what I did say.

Mr. COUMBE: I have supported the report of the Select Committee. I do not believe that this amendment would in any way inhibit the work of the Royal Commission. The member for Gouger has validly said that the decision of an absolute majority of councillors would indicate greater support to the Commission than would the decision of a simply majority of councillors. As the amendment will give councillors an opportunity to support recommendations made by the Royal Commission, I believe it is most necessary.

Mr. WARDLE: I support the amendment. Surely, if the Minister believes in democracy, he will support a. decision by an absolute majority. About 12 months ago, a Bill to amend this Act provided that, in certain circumstances, everyone had to be present before a change was made. We should try to achieve some measure of stability in this legislation.

Mr. MATHWIN: I, too, support the amendment. I am disappointed that the Minister has not seen fit to reply to the simple question asked by the member for Heysen.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: He's not in the Chamber to listen to a reply.

Mr. MATHWIN: Obviously he does not think he will get a reply. If the Minister were making a conscience-vote on this matter, he would vote in favour of an absolute majority decision by councillors. A simple majority decision would be a shaky basis for finalising these matters. I believe that a decision by an absolute majority of councillors will help the Royal Commission, which will know by this means that it has the full support of local government. I ask the Minister to reconsider his decision on this amendment.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Becker. Blacker, Boundy, Chapman, Coumbe (teller), Eastick, Evans, Mathwin, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell. Rodda, Russack, Tonkin, Venning, and Wardle.

Noes (20)—Mr. Max Brown. Mrs. Byrne. Messrs. Corcoran. Crimes, Dunstan, Groth, Harrison, Hopgood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, Olson, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo (teller), and Wright.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs. Dean Brown, Goldsworthy; and Gunn. Noes—Messrs. Broomhill, McRae, and Wells.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. COUMBE: I move:

In new subsection (3) to strike out "twenty" and insert "fifteen".

The effect of this amendment is to reduce the number of ratepayers in an area who can request a poll. The Act provides at present for a figure of 10 per cent whilst the Bill provides for 20 per cent, but the Opposition considers that 15 per cent is a fair and reasonable compromise. Many sections of the Act refer to the varying percentages of ratepayers necessary to request a poll on many matters.'but this compromise provides a chance for those who wish to object to request a poll.

Mr. RUSSACK: I support the amendment. Section 427 of the Act provides that, in the case of a municipality, 5 per cent or 100 ratepayers may demand a poll and. in the case of a district council, 21 ratepayers. The figure of 20 per cent is a steep percentage of people required to demand a poll. Recently a local government poll was requested and some of the people whose names were on

the demand were in favour of the proposition and wanted the poll to confirm it. Tn the ensuing poll 85 per cent was in favour. I believe the amendment is an eminently reasonable compromise.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I oppose the amendment for a number of reasons. Prior to the Select Committee's deciding to recommend that the Bill then before the Parliament should not be proceeded with but that we should try to seek voluntary amalgamation, severance and annexation, we realised that in doing so we had to provide additional backing to the body so that it could give effect to the desires contained in the reports of the Royal Commission or the Bill, or, as the member for Gouger properly said, any proposition capable of being achieved after discussion with the local government body. We were fully aware of the existing provisions of the Local Government Act and it was properly pointed out to us by witnesses that, although certain provisions of the Act enabled councils. to do all the things proposed in the Royal Commission's report, few had done anything. In fact, if members are interested enough to read the transcript of the Royal Commission they will see that witness after witness said that, unless there was a strong motivating force, it was highly unlikely that councils would do anything themselves. We started off in the Select Committee at that point and we unanimously adopted the proposal to strengthen the hand of the Royal Commission in its endeavours to achieve the objectives contained in the report. There is no doubt that 20 per cent is high, as the honourable member for Torrens has said: it has been made high deliberately. We could go back to the figure the member for Gouger mentioned of 21 ratepayers who could demand a poll or we could use the figure of 50. If one looks right through the Local Government Act, one finds no logic in the number of persons who can demand a poll. I suggest that members read the Local Government Act Revision Committee's report in this regard.

The member for Torrens complained about the Local Government Act: of course, it must be rewritten. We are all ashamed of it in its present, form. In due course the Government will bring down a new Bill, and I think the member for Torrens would be the first to appreciate the tremendous amount of drafting work required. That is the only reason why we have not introduced a new Bill. The Local Government Act Revision Committee recommended that 20 per cent should be the percentage and I suggest that, when the committee's recommendations become law, the 21 ratepayers referred to by the member for Gouger will disappear and we will have uniformity with 20 per cent. This is an ideal time to start.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. COUMBE: I move:

In new subsection (4) to strike out "unless a majority of the ratepayers voting, and at least one-third of the total number of the ratepayers on the voters' rolls for the areas affected by the proposal vote against the proposal" and insert "only if a majority of the ratepayers of each area who vote at the poll vote in favour of the proposal".

We have reached the stage where the councils have agreed, a sufficient number of people have demanded a poll, and the poll has been held. The Bill provides:

> ... the question shall be deemed to have been carried in the affirmative unless a majority of the ratepayers voting, and at least one-third of the total number of the ratepayers on the voters' rolls for the areas affected by the proposal vote against the proposal.

It is not enough for a majority of ratepayers voting to vote against the proposition: at least one-third of the total ratepayers entitled to vote must vote against the proposal. There must be one-third of the enrolled voters against the proposition, and under voluntary voting that is simply not on. The Minister is always getting up in this House and complaining about the turn-out of people for local government voting.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Let's have compulsory voting.

Mr. COUMBE: The Minister must not sidetrack members. Let us bring the Minister back to what he wants. The Minister has said that the legislation must be streamlined to facilitate the work of the Royal Commission but, if he objects to my proposal, he is actually impeding the work of the Royal Commission because what I am proposing is a simple democratic procedure. That is, the proposition is carried in the affirmative if there is a majority vote in each of the areas affected. How does this tally with what the Minister says? After all, he is a member of a Party that rants at every opportunity about one vote one value. The Minister is always saying that a majority should carry the day; that is what I am providing. In my amendment I am saying that it will be carried unless a majority of ratepayers is against it. In effect, it is an expression of opinion by the people concerned and, after all, they are the ones who matter because they live in the area and contribute to and use the facilities provided there. It is their voice that should be heard.

I am providing a simplification of what the Minister is providing in this measure. The majority of people living in an area should be able to express their views one way or the other. In effect, this procedure will help the Royal Commission. I challenge any member opposite to return to his district and put my amendment to his constituents to see whether they object to it. I am sure they will approve of it. If two or more council areas are involved (and there could be as many as three or four) a poll should be held simultaneously on the same day in each area. Surely nothing could be fairer. Feeling sure that ratepayers in areas concerned will support my views on this matter, I commend my amendment to members.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I hope I have interpreted the amendment correctly. If I have not, I am sure the honourable member will point out my error. As I understand his amendment, two factors are involved. The first is that, if a poll is demanded, it should be held separately but on the same day and at the same time in each area. If councils A and B were to be amalgamated, and the Royal Commission put such a proposition to the councils and they both agreed, 20 per cent of ratepayers in the entire new area of councils A and B could demand a poll, which would be conducted in the proposed new area. The member for Torrens is saying that that amalgamation shall not proceed unless it is carried by a majority of people in existing councils A and B. I find the logic of that extremely difficult to follow.

Dr. Tonkin: Why?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Let us assume that Brighton and Marion councils were to be amalgamated, resulting in a wider council area. Members of both councils agreed there should be a new council area, not an expanded Brighton or Marion council, but a completely new area to be known as, say. Warradale corporation. Surely the people of that area should jointly and collectively have their say on whether or not the area should be a new council area. Groups of people should not be able to express a wish that they want to join other councils in the area. This is why so many people misinterpreted the report of the Royal Commission. People believed at that time that some councils were going to be swallowed up in other council

areas. We all saw in the newspapers headlines such as "Brighton to be demolished".

Dr. Eastick: That was before the political ramifications were understood.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Leader has tried to bring politics into this matter all the way through. He knows the politics of it only too well.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Throughout these proceedings I have tried to keep political bias out of it. I believe the Select Committee was successful in this respect with almost every witness it had before it, with the exception of about three witnesses who deliberately brought politics into the proceedings and were immediately slapped down. The member for Rocky River came before the committee and did not introduce Party politics.

Mr. Coumbe: Nor did the member for Alexandra.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: True. However, one. Kangaroo Island witness, when giving his evidence, severely embarrassed members of the Select Committee by trying to introduce politics. For goodness sake let us keep politics out of this because, if we do, we may get somewhere with local government. The proposal under the report of the Royal Commission is the constitution of new council areas, not the carving up of areas as was suggested in relation to Meadows. Reporters who wrote in their newspapers about that situation did not know what they were writing about.

If we can accept the concept of the joining of council areas, the fallacy, as raised by the member for Torrens, of conducting individual polls is clearly evident. I suggest that, if we cannot accept that concept, we give the game away, because that is the basis of what the Royal Commission tried to put to the people, local government interests, and Parliament when it brought down its first and second reports. If we are to have the concept of new areas, the new areas as a body must have the right to say whether they accept or reject the concept.

The second aspect is that the vote will be carried unless a majority of ratepayers and one-third vote against the proposal. The member for Torrens and other members would be interested in a paper that will be presented to a meeting of Australian and New Zealand Local Government Ministers on April 3.

Mr. Evans: By whom?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I presume it will be delivered by the New Zealand Minister (Hon. Henry May). After the conference, I shall be pleased to give the paper to the Leader for perusal by any Opposition members. Paragraph 37 indicates that the Local Government Act in New Zealand has been amended to provide that, where a proposition for amalgamation is put forward, it shall be given effect to unless a majority of the persons entitled to vote vote against the proposal. If there are 1 000 voters in a proposed new council area, that area will be constituted unless 501 people vote against the proposal.

Mr. Coumbe: The one-third isn't mentioned there.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That is a more stringent provision than the one in the Bill. I should be pleased if the member for Torrens would support me to remove the provision that is there and include the New Zealand method. I think we are lagging behind New Zealand. I am not disposed to accept the amendment, as it will not facilitate the changes in local government that are needed urgently.

Mr. EVANS: The Minister has taken for granted that a new area will be created immediately the councillors make a decision. He forgets that the councillors represent existing areas and the people in them. I support the amendment, because I believe not only that the first decision must be made by the councillors but also that the people they represent should be able to vote independently to decide whether they support the councillors' move. The Minister is trying to mislead us and the concept that he is trying to put over is only a subterfuge. Who has said that the New Zealand provision will prove to be the correct one? Does the Minister believe that he is always right? In a democracy, people vote for a proposition before it is accepted and a democracy does not require that a percentage must vote against a proposal before it is rejected.

Mr. RUSSACK: The Minister has referred to logic, but I wonder whether it is logic or cunning. If there are 800 ratepayers in an area and a 20 per cent vote is required in the demanding of a poll, only 160 signatures will be necessary. In another area, comprising 6 000 people, 1 200 signatures would be required to demand a poll. When the poll is held and the result is to be determined, it changes from an area to areas, so the majority from both areas, if there were two, would determine the result. In the case of Munno Para council and Elizabeth council; what chance would Munno Para have in determining the result of a poll? The amendment would allow each council area to stand alone and, if the Minister believes in logic and democratic principles, he must accept it.

Mr. WARDLE: We could have one council comprising 6 000 ratepayers and two other councils comprising 2 500 each. Because of the aggregation, one council could decide that the other two should join it. The principle is wrong, regardless of whether it applies to a country area or a metropolitan area.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (17)—Messrs. Becker, Blacker, Boundy, Dean Brown, Chapman, Coumbe (teller), Eastick, Evans, Goldsworthy, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Rodda, Russack, Tonkin, Venning, and Wardle.

Noes (20)—Mr. Max Brown, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Corcoran, Crimes, Dunstan, Groth, Harrison, Hopgood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, Olson, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo (teller), and Wright.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Gunn, and Mathwin. Noes—Messrs. Broomhill, Duncan, McRae, and Wells.

Majority of 3 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived; clause passed.

Title passed.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Local Government) moved:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I will confine my remarks to the Bill as it came out of Committee. Although I hope that it will achieve the purpose for which it is intended, I regret that amendments that have been moved are not in the Bill as it has come out of Committee.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's remarks must be confined to the Bill as it came out of Committee.

Mr. COUMBE: I am trying to address myself to that point.

The SPEAKER: Order! That remark is out of order.

Mr. COUMBE: On behalf of the Opposition, I hope that the Bill as it has come out of Committee will work as we all hope it will work in the interests of local government in this State and that local government will be able to work for the betterment of its areas and people, despite the failure of our efforts to assist.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILISATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (BOARD)

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL (VARIOUS)

Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment.

REAL PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

AGED AND INFIRM PERSONS' PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (SIGNS)

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (INSPECTIONS)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 20. Page 2493.)

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): I support the Bill, because there has been a need for this legislation for some time now, especially regarding the safely inspections of buses, etc. One has only to recall the tragic bus .accident that occurred at Cooma in September, 1973, caused by the malfunctioning of the vehicle's brakes. The passengers had chartered the bus, and I well recall the hardship and anxiety caused to them and their families. I well remember, too, the brave acts that took place at the time and the way in which the public reacted splendidly to the plight of those involved in the accident. The Brighton Senior Citizens Club, the Salvation Army and Lions all helped wonderfully the unfortunate victims of that shocking accident. Provisions of this Bill will improve safety measures so that a similar disaster will, hopefully, not occur again.

Some clauses in the Bill need further explanation from the Minister when he replies in this debate. Different inspection requirements are necessary in the case of buses, depending on whether they are to be used in the metropolitan area or country areas; and the requirements relating to school buses are different from those relating to Tramways Trust buses, and so on. The Police Department, which conducted these inspections in the past, did a magnificent job, although it faced difficulty under the previous legislation.

In his second reading explanation, the Minister states that in many situations bus services are run completely free of charge. Various schools, councils, and other organisations run buses free of charge. The Brighton council now operates a bus service to lake senior citizens of the district to the shops, the library, and the senior citizens' club. Although all members will agree that councils maintain such vehicles properly, those vehicles will now be covered by this legislation. The people involved are committed to ensuring that their vehicles are properly inspected. Trained mechanics will now be employed to inspect these vehicles. The Minister also stales:

> The Bill intends to establish a central inspection authority for the purposes of inspecting all omnibuses and all vehicles that ply for hire or reward, at intervals of six months.

On this provision the Minister and I may disagree. In a previous debate on similar legislation, I drew to the Minister's attention the fact that providing for inspections at regular intervals left much to be desired. The distance travelled by a vehicle is most important. During a six-month period, a hire bus travelling to Brisbane, Cairns or Townsville may travel 32 180 kilometres to 48 270 km. A provision should be made for inspections to be carried out having regard to the distance travelled by heavy vehicles, for an inspection at six-month intervals may not be sufficient. I hope the Government will consider this matter seriously.

I believe that the Government has been sincere in introducing this legislation. Over the past year or two some shocking accidents have occurred. As the Minister said in his second reading explanation, this Bill contains a safety provision. If this is one of the main purposes of the Bill, the Minister must think again about inspections having to be carried out each six months. The Minister said in his second reading explanation that taxi-cabs would not be covered by the Bill, as adequate machinery already existed for their regular inspection. I do not disagree with that. Dealing with clause 9 of the Bill, the Minister said:

> Clause 9 provides for the recovery of the costs of installing and maintaining traffic control devices from the owners of businesses that necessitate the installation of such a device. For example, where a pedestrian crossing has been installed at a large shopping complex, it is reasonable to assume that, if it had not been for the custom attracted by the complex, it would not have been necessary to install any such control device.

Unfortunately, it seems that private enterprise is being made to pay for the cost of these installations. The Government must remember that, when it widens a road, it is made into a potential speedway. The Government should therefore have regard to pedestrians as much as it does to motorists.

Now that the widening of Brighton Road, in my district, has been completed we have, from Seacliff to Glenelg, a virtual speed track along which there are schools and which many pedestrians must negotiate. Glenelg and Brighton would possibly comprise more older people than would any other district in South Australia,

probably because they are served better by their member of Parliament and because, in any event, there is no better place in which to live. These people must now negotiate a much wider road than that to which they have been accustomed, and this road carries much more, and faster, traffic than it carried in the past. When the Government plans to upgrade such roads, it must consider older, as well as the younger, pedestrians, for whom more crossings should be provided to enable them to cross roads safely. I refer, for instance, to the junction of Brighton and Jetty Roads, Glenelg. It is virtually impossible for any person, no matter what age he be, to negotiate this junction between, say, 4.50 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. each week day. Many older people who are encouraged to shop in this area and who, for example, collect their newspaper find it a terrible experience to negotiate Brighton Road. Again, I appeal to the Minister to do something about installing traffic signals in this area, which is an excellent example of what often happens when a road is upgraded.

Clause 9 also provides that the Government will be able to get a council to pay its share of the cost of an installation, and this also involves private enterprise, especially shopkeepers. In Somerton, a few small traders are operating on each side of a road on which the Government will have to provide a pedestrian crossing. Who will foot the bill for that crossing? Will the small shopkeepers have to pay for a pedestrian crossing merely because they are unfortunate enough to be in a local shopping area? This situation is a little unfair. Undoubtedly, the Minister has other situations in mind. I refer, for instance, to the crossing, near Uniroyal Proprietary Limited, on South Road. Traffic signals were placed in that area probably to assist that company in relation to parking arrangements for its staff. After that company created the problem, traffic lights were installed for it. It ought, therefore, to pay something for those lights.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: It did.

Mr. MATHWIN: I did not know that.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You ought to be a bit more careful. The cost was shared by the Marion and Mitcham councils and Uniroyal.

Mr. MATHWIN: And the Highways Department did not pay anything? Usually, it pays two-thirds and the council one-third of the cost involved.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That was before this scheme came into operation.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg.

Mr. MATHWIN: When many more traffic lights have eventually been installed in the metropolitan area, some local shopkeepers will find it practically impossible to pay the bills for which the Minister could make them responsible. It will indeed be a bad thing if those people are placed in this situation. The Minister said in his second reading explanation:

Tn those circumstances it is proper for the Minister to require the business owners to make some contribution to the authority responsible for the installation of the device. However, a right of appeal to the Supreme Court against any such requirement is given to business owners.

Can one imagine the local fish and chip vendor having to go to the Supreme Court to obtain a judgment on whether he should pay something towards the cost of installing traffic lights?

Mr. Evans: He might have had his chips before he started.

Mr. MATHWIN: That could well be so. It would be unfair if this happened to these local family businesses, which are as advantageous to shoppers as are the large shopping centres and supermarkets. Having reservations about this matter, I hope that, when the Minister replies, he will explain what costs private enterprise will be faced with in future. It will be difficult for them to operate in some circumstances. Clause 3 strikes out the definition of "breath analysing instrument", but the Minister did not give any reason for this change. This clause also inserts a definition of a "cycle" and, although the clause refers to a motor cycle and a pedal cycle, it does not refer to a motor scooter, a vehicle that is used by many people today.

The definitions to which I have just referred are to appear after the definition of "cross-over", and one would think that definitions of motor vehicles would be placed in the same section so that it would be easier for people to read the Act. I have no argument with the provisions of clause 5, but I believe that the provisions of clause 6 could prove costly for councils, because of the cost of installing, maintaining, operating, and removing traffic control devices. With more signals being installed on our roads, this provision may impose a heavy burden on councils. Also, councils will be involved in the replacing and repairing of traffic signs that have been struck and damaged by motorists. Every week one can see traffic lights or signs that have been knocked down.

I do not think that councils carry insurance that would cover these matters, and they will be faced with a further burden in relation to costs. Will the Minister, or the Minister and the board, after consulting with councils, define what a local shopping area is and who has to pay the cost of installing these signals? People should be educated to cross a road at a pedestrian crossing, rather than cressing as they often do now by straggling all over the place. Roadworks also concern councils, and I wonder what the situation will be concerning safety sails. At present they are considered to be illegal, but the provisions of this Bill may go some way toward clarifying the matter. Clause 20 amends section 78 of the principal Act, which provides that a vehicle shall stop not less than 10ft. or more than 40ft. from a "stop" sign at a railway or tram crossing. I believe that the distance of 40ft. is unrealistic and should be amended. I repeat my earlier remark: I am concerned that the inspections should be carried out every six months rather than on a mileage basis. I hope the Minister will deal in his reply with the matters I have raised. I support the Bill.

Mr. PAYNE (Mitchell): I, too, support the Bill. In introducing it, the Minister said that its principal object was to provide for inspection at regular intervals of all buses operating in this State and of all other vehicles plying for hire or reward. This would be a premise to which none of us would object; certainly, we would all support the principle. The honourable member for Glenelg supported it, his only point of variation relating to the frequency of inspections, and he wondered whether that was suitable in the case of buses used on long trips. Obviously, some vehicles travel longer distances than others, and simply to consider inspections on the basis of time might not be all that could be desired.

I doubt, however, whether there could be much argument with the principle involved, as it has been stated by the Minister in explaining the Bill. I have heard no interjections to suggest that there would be any argument; I am sure we all agree that it is something that should be done as soon as possible. The member for Glenelg

referred to a tragedy of which we are all aware. I do not think he suggests that measures such as those in the Bill will necessarily prevent such tragedies, but they will go some distance towards ensuring that vehicles are in the safest possible condition when being lawfully used. At present, buses, taxis, and various categories of bus (M.T.T. buses, charter buses, and so on) are subject to inspections at varying periods. The Minister showed quite clearly that the existing legislation applied only to cases where people were carried for fee or reward. We must all agree that in many cases people are being carried in numbers equivalent to bus loads where there is no fee or suggestion of a reward involved. To accept that these people should not be covered would be foreign to the thinking of members on both sides. From that viewpoint, we agree that such legislation is necessary. If we are to have coverage it should cater for all vehicles required to be in the safest possible condition.

The Minister mentioned one category of vehicles not to be covered by this legislation, referring to taxi-cabs licensed by the Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Board. It would seem prudent to me (and I am sure other members will agree) that, while we are considering this legislation, we need to be sure that exclusions are justifiable and that whatever applies to excluded categories at the moment is of such a standard compared to what is proposed for other vehicles that we can accept it. I have inquired about what applies to taxis licensed by the board, and I find that they must be inspected twice a year by officers of the board. That is an inspection for full roadworthiness, but the vehicles are submitted to brake-testing every three months. Those of us who ride occasionally in taxis will agree that this is an excellent requirement and that it should continue. Taxis in which I have ridden seem to have been in need of their brakes, and I am pleased that they are required to be tested every three months so that, if any defect is found, something is done about it.

If necessary, the board declares the vehicle defective immediately on the inspection and requires remedial action to be taken. The faults are listed, and the vehicle is not available for use on the road as a taxi until it has been inspected after the necessary repair work has been carried out. The officer performing this work is a skilled man and he inspects 826 cabs twice a year, with brake-testing presumably four times a year. Certainly, he is earning his money and doing a good job. When some categories are excluded from legislation we must be sure that the exclusion is justified. We should not argue with the Minister's suggestion in this regard, and we must be sure that passengers riding in the vehicles will be getting extra coverage from the safety provisions outlined. The legislation has been framed with the decisions of the Australian Transport Advisory Council in mind. The council has as its members the Ministers of Transport in the various States as well as the Commonwealth Minister, and it meets regularly to make recommendations for the whole of Australia, and also at State level, in relation to road safety generally. One of its decisions concerned a requirement for buses and similar vehicles to be inspected to ensure that they met a reputable standard.

[Sitting suspended from 6 *to* 7.30 *p.m.]*

Mr. PAYNE: In supporting this Bill before the dinner adjournment, I said I thought that no member would disagree with the Minister's aim to improve the safety of passengers riding in buses or in other vehicles that ply for hire or reward in South Australia. I went on to test the Minister's contention that there was no need to include metropolitan taxi-cabs in the legislation because they were already covered adequately. On examination, I believe we ascertained that he was entirely correct, as an appropriate system to ensure the proper safety of taxi-cabs already exists. It seems to me that it is reasonable to examine that part of the Bill that relates to this question on the basis of whether we are satisfied with certain other provisions in the Bill. For instance, are we satisfied with the body the Minister has said he will name as the authority, namely, the Government Motor Garage. We need to ask ourselves, therefore, whether we are satisfied with its ability to implement what all of us would agree are necessary provisions in relation to inspections that are to be introduced by this legislation.

I am sure we would all come to the same conclusion and would have the same confidence in the body that the Minister has. Members would understand that for buses or similar vehicles to meet this sort of requirement a mechanical and electrical inspection would be required. To make such an examination in relation to specification and actual condition requires a degree of expertise, skill and training. Such a system requires trained personnel; it certainly requires a certain amount of specialised equipment which would not necessarily be available throughout the whole State but which would certainly be available now at the Government Motor Garage. In future, additional equipment and/or personnel could be obtained if necessary.

So at least on that fairly brief but I believe sufficiently comprehensive consideration of the Government Motor Garage becoming the authority we would undoubtedly agree entirely with the Minister that it is a body that is more than suitable to undertake the duties he has in mind. Another way in which we should look at this legislation is to ensure as far as possible that the mechanics (and I intend no pun) or the practicability of the legislation are such that it can be reasonably applied. Inspections are required at least twice a year. Can that object be achieved in the Bill before us? If we examine this measure in that light, we must conclude that the legislation is more than adequate in that direction. New Part IVA, which allows for the inspection of vehicles and the issuing of certificates, provides for the refusal of a certificate where an inspection reveals a defect or inadequacy that would render a vehicle unsafe for the carriage of passengers. After all, with this legislation we are trying to ensure that vehicles are safe for the carriage of passengers. The Bill also provides for the random inspection of vehicles. Although there is to be a routine and organised set-up where vehicles are inspected regularly, I am sure that all honourable members agree that it is advisable to provide for the random inspection of vehicles.

I believe this provision will deal with the query raised by the member for Glenelg, who said that he was worried that inspections would be mandatory on a six-monthly basis and that no thought had been given to the distance travelled by vehicles. Random inspections could go some way towards ameliorating that problem. A member of the Police Force may call on a driver to stop so that an inspection can be made of any certificate affixed to the vehicle. In my view, that method covers the situation more than adequately and fulfils the requirement I set out at the beginning of my speech.

The Minister has power to exempt a person or a class of persons from certain of the requirements of the Bill. He has power not to require payment of the fee that will be part of the mechanism for obtaining the necessary inspection certificate. It may well be that charitable organisations

or other people who, in the opinion of the Minister, warrant no charge being made can be exempted if the Minister so desires. In addition, provision is made for the way in which certificates are to be affixed to vehicles. Such powers should be contained in a Bill of this nature. Regulatory power is provided, and it is under that power that regulations can be drawn up to specify matters of this kind. If one examines the provisions of the Bill in relation to cost, one. arrives at the conclusion at which I. have arrived, that we should support the Bill unanimously.

The fee of $7.50 suggested in the Bill could not, 1 believe, be considered to be exorbitant. Associated costs may be involved in presenting a vehicle for inspection at a certain time, but that does not seem to be a reason for not supporting the legislation. The only other matter to which I wish to refer (and this matter has been referred to extensively by the member for Glenelg) relates to other parts of the Bill that bear no relationship to the inspection of vehicles. In this connection a constituent of mine (Mr. Gordon Howie), who is quite well known to most honourable members, wrote to me and suggested that, in clause 23, which provides for councils not to authorise angle parking on the road without the approval of the Road Traffic Board, perhaps a penalty could be included. I should point out to honourable members that Mr. Howie is not certain about the amount of the penalty he should like applied to councils that fail to comply but, as a constituent, he has every right to express his view. On more than one occasion the same gentleman has helped me in relation to matters of this nature.

When a man takes the trouble to write to me I always try to consider the points he raises. He also pointed out that new subsection (2b), contained in clause 20, does not appear to make sense. He points out that he often reads legislation that, while printed correctly, does not really make sense. In this case I am glad to acknowledge that he is entirely correct, but I will not go into detail, as an amendment will later come before the House to deal with that. Mr. Howie pointed out that amending Bills to amend the Road Traffic Act raised in his mind the fact that many traffic by-laws are passed by metropolitan and other councils, but he believes that that area of control should rest properly with the Parliament, and that by-laws should not be made by councils. He believes laws and amendments to those laws should be contained only in the Road Traffic Act or other associated Acts. I have not given much thought to the proposition that he has put to me, but there may be merit in what he has said, because Gordon puts much thought and time into this area of life and I think he is generally fairly expert in all these fields. I thought there was merit in what he said and I have mentioned it for the information of the House. I have stated that we ought to be unanimous in supporting this Bill and in endeavouring to pass it as soon as possible. For that reason, I will conclude my speech.

Dr. TONKIN (Bragg): I, too, support the Bill and, although I do not often agree with the member for Mitchell, I agree with much of what he has said this evening. I find it difficult not to reminisce after hearing the honourable member refer to the testing of taxi-cabs, especially the testing of their brakes. Members may know that at one stage of my career I drove a taxi-cab for a living. The periodic checks of the vehicle and its roadworthiness every six months, which also included a check of the interior of the taxi-cab and of whether it was in a fit and proper condition to carry passengers, together with the brake testing (I think every three months), created quite a stir.

The checking always came on drivers unexpectedly. I do not know whether the owners of the taxi-cabs knew when the inspections were to be conducted, but inevitably the driver was told to get the taxi-cab into shape and get it to the park lands by 10 a.m. for testing. Sometimes I shudder to think about what went on when we took our vehicles there for testing. We managed to pass the test every time by the skin of our teeth, and I think that was by good luck more than by good management. Like the member for Mitchell, I hope that the standards of testing will be kept high.

Whilst I have every confidence in officers of the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board, I consider that we must have legislation to maintain the standards of which the honourable member has spoken. The provisions generally for testing buses are long overdue, and it is necessary that they apply regardless of whether the vehicles are carrying passengers for fee or free of charge. In his second reading explanation the Minister stated:

> The present situation whereby some bus operators are able to evade the law under the guise of section 92 of the Constitution will, therefore, no longer prevail.

I take exception to that statement, because I do not believe that bus operators consciously would try to avoid safety regulations. Undoubtedly, brake failures have occurred, and we have one tragic example well in mind, but I do not think that any bus operator consciously would try to evade any regulation when the safety of passengers was involved. I do not believe that we should say that a bus operator would do that any more than we should say that officers of the South Australian Railways could be blamed for the recent derailment. I consider that the part of the legislation dealing with bus testing is entirely satisfactory, and I am pleased with it.

Some other provisions in the Bill are something of a potpourri, and I should like to comment on them. Clause 9 deals with the recovery of the cost of installing certain traffic control devices. I consider that, if the installation of traffic control devices is made necessary by the proliferation of businesses in a certain place, perhaps the businesses should be expected to contribute initially to the cost of those devices. However, I do not believe that the businesses should be asked to contribute a major amount, because presumably traffic control devices would be necessary there anyway in the future, regardless of whether the businesses had been expanding in that place.

However, I think what has been forgotten is that many small businesses having premises near where traffic control devices have been installed have been disadvantaged seriously because of the installation of traffic devices. That has happened because people cannot any longer park in the area outside those small businesses, and I think that, if we are to ask that businesses near where traffic control devices have had to be installed pay compensation because the devices are there, perhaps equally we should be considering measures to provide compensation for those businesses whose trade drops because the increase in traffic makes necessary the installation of traffic control devices.

I have considered this matter carefully, but as a private member I cannot move an amendment along the lines that I have mentioned, because such an amendment would commit the Government to spending money. However, it is a matter to be considered. Even if that compensation takes the form of a contribution towards the cost of acquiring vacant land or property nearby on which those business people may establish parking facilities, consideration should be given to the Government's contributing towards the cost of obtaining that property if

it can be shown that the lack of parking facilities is affecting seriously the viability of those small businesses.

The Bill provides for appeal to the Supreme Court against any decision by the Minister, and I consider that that facility could apply in reverse. That matter ought to be considered seriously. Clause 10 deals with a matter that I have raised in Question Time this afternoon and in the debate last week on another Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill. I will not deal with that matter further now, but I still consider that there is real danger in the present system whereby "stop" signs are not discernible as such from the reverse side by other people in the intersection. That is leading to a dangerous situation, and I believe that consideration must be given (and I am pleased that it is being given) to making "stop" signs identifiable by people elsewhere on the intersection.

I also consider it necessary to require people to remove flashing red, amber or green neon signs near intersections where traffic control devices are installed. This should be done in the interests of road safety, because otherwise a most confusing situation can result. Clause 17 changes the present provision and prohibits the making of U turns on intersections where traffic lights are installed. I consider that making U turns at intersections where traffic lights are installed is as dangerous when the lights are not operating as it is when the lights are operating. I do not think the operation of the lights makes any difference.

A day does not pass that I do not see, when I am driving in the city, people make U turns at traffic lights. The offence is becoming more prevalent, and, although the increase in the monetary penalty may have some deterrent effect, it will not be completely successful unless not only the amount of penalty but also the fact that it is a dangerous practice is publicised. Although the Road Safety Committee does an excellent job, it cannot cover every matter every time, and I believe that this matter should be drawn to its attention soon. I also remember seeing frequent offences against the mandatory signs of "No turning" or "No right turn". Another offence, which I do not believe is covered by the Bill but which, nevertheless, occurs, is that of people turning left against a red light at a location where there is no advisory sign saying "Turn left any time with care". T believe that "Turn left any time with care" signs have led some people to believe that it is permissible to turn left any time with care even when no such sign is present, and I have seen a few close shaves result from that situation, too. Once again, it comes back to the question of adequate education of the motoring public. Emphasis should be placed by the Police Force on that offence for a short time until people come to know that it is an offence and that they should not be committing it. Definitions of "cycle", "motor cycle", and "pedal cycle" are reasonable.

The only other matter to which I will refer is clause 41, which deals with the compulsory wearing of seat belts. I believe that the seat belt legislation has been a spectacular success and that it has been most successful in reducing the degree of accidents that have been caused to people. I think that, in the main, the theories advanced by members of the College of Surgeons and by other authorities have been well and truly borne out. More importantly, I believe that, although at any time I do not like the idea of passing legislation to compel people to do something that their common sense ought to tell them what to do, it is a good thing. Although I do not like that kind of action, in this case it has worked well. I believe there are few people, particularly young drivers, who get into their motor vehicle nowadays without fastening their seat belt before they start driving, as a matter of course; that is a good thing.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: What about the waggon you used to have out front?

Dr. TONKIN: I have no control over that any more. Despite the Minister's rude interjection, I support the Bill, which should pass without difficulty.

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): Reference has been made to the professional driver and the vehicle he operates, whether it be a bus or taxi. I think it should go on record that such people have the best safety record of any group of drivers in the State. For this reason, I believe that they are generally not a danger on the road. Although we should not say that provisions should not be laid down regarding inspection of their vehicles, if one looks at the records in relation to taxis, one will see that more taxi drivers have been murdered in this State since the Second World War than have been killed while driving in taxis, and that fewer people have been killed by taxis than the number of taxi drivers who have been murdered during the same period. This aspect is worth studying. To the average driver, taxi drivers may appear to take risks that most of us would fear to take.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must link his remarks with the Bill, which deals with inspections.

Mr. EVANS: I am doing that, Mr. Speaker. If they take risks when the vehicle is not up to scratch as regards safety, an accident may occur. If they take risks and an accident does not occur, that could prove that their vehicle was up to scratch. The record for Metropolitan Tramways Trust buses and other service buses is good. However, when an accident takes place, whether caused by human error or mechanical defect, the results are often serious and remain in our minds as being disastrous. We do not try to forget them, nor do we want them repeated, as they indicate that we should be more stringent in the safety field.

Although I can see a need for placing the burden on businesses to pay the costs of installing lights, I fear placing such a provision in the hands of the wrong type of bureaucracy. The Bill refers to "business or other activity", and I wonder whether Football Park would fall into this category and whether it would have to pay a large sum for lights or. traffic control devices installed near the park, or perhaps even up to two miles away from it. I suppose one could call the park a business or activity, but it is struggling to meet its commitments. If the park falls into that category, and if other sporting projects were in a similar category, we would be imposing an unfair burden on them. The provision allowing the individual or organisation to appeal to the court to have the. cost varied seems reasonable, but. in practice it would be unreasonable. It could cost an organisation many thousands of dollars to take a case to the court although, in the main, I doubt whether many such cases would be fought out in court. Although I am not over-anxious about the provision, I dislike it, because most traffic signals are installed for the benefit of the whole community, not only of the business or sporting complex. The people who go to Football Park come from all over Adelaide, and this burden could be placed on the whole of the State.

I do not believe that the park, as an example, should be required to pay to have traffic control devices installed, and the same could be said about many business interests. The member for Bragg was right in saying that this provision could adversely affect some business interests; that was a fair criticism. The Minister said that the provision relating to the combined weights on axles would

make it easier to prove a charge against the offender. I concede his point, because if it can be assessed as an aggregate weight, proving a charge would be easier for the authorities. Although I accept the provision, I hope that the Minister will explain why that change has been made. I support the Bill.

Mrs. BYRNE (Tea Tree Gully): I refer mainly to the principal reason for introducing the Bill: to provide for the inspection at regular intervals of all buses that operate in the State and of other vehicles that ply for hire or reward. I was surprised to hear that there are deficiencies in the law relating to the safety of commercial passenger vehicles, that the inspection requirements differ according to what the vehicle is used for, and that the present Act applies only to vehicles that carry passengers for fee or charge. As these deficiencies exist, I commend the Minister for introducing the Bill. In my district some bus services run free of charge to shopping complexes, and I am sure that other members have similar services in their districts. It is certainly desirable that such vehicles be covered by the Act and inspected regularly.

The only time that I have ever received a complaint concerning the roadworthiness or otherwise of a vehicle related to a private bus operator licensed by the Transport Control Board. The bus concerned carried schoolchildren and other passengers. The Minister of Transport would be aware of this case. Safety inspections were carried out by the Government Motor Garage on some vehicles, which were passed as roadworthy. Another vehicle was later found to be defective, and the board cancelled its permit relating to that bus. I am pleased that, in his second reading explanation, the Minister said that a new section 163(*e*) was being inserted in the Act. This will empower the authority to make random inspections. This is necessary to cover an instance such as that to which I have referred, where complaints arise between inspections, which are expected to be carried out each six months.

The only other matter on which I should like to comment has already been mentioned by the previous two speakers. I refer to clause 9, which provides for the recovery of the cost of installing and maintaining traffic control devices from the owners of businesses that necessitate the installation of such devices. Also, a right of appeal to the Supreme Court will exist. This is indeed a worthwhile provision because, from my observations, I know that when shopping complexes are built the installation of such devices is necessary almost immediately. However, they are rarely installed immediately. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic increases significantly, and it is dangerous for some elderly citizens and, for that matter, young children to cross roads near shopping complexes. Making the business responsible for part of the cost involved will help to have necessary safety devices installed more quickly. I support the Bill, as it is in the interests of road safely.

Mr. BECKER (Hanson): I, too, support the Bill and endorse the remarks made by the member for Glenelg, who carefully and assiduously researched the Bill and explained to the House the point of view that the Minister was trying to advance. The Bill makes numerous amendments to the Act in an attempt to upgrade road safety in this State. However, it does so only in part and in minor ways. In assessing the Bill, one finds that the regulations or controls regarding passenger buses will be more strictly supervised. Buses will be subjected to regular inspections, and certain rules and regulations will be enforced in relation to privately owned or departmental vehicles. However the Bill does not spell out the situation regarding trucks used to transport employees. I refer, for instance, to E. & W.S. Department trucks, over the open tray of which a canopy is thrown to enable employees to be carried on them. Although this is not a major matter, some consideration should be given to the safely of those employees. Perhaps the department ought to upgrade its fleet and provide more suitable transport for its employees.

Generally, one can see the need to upgrade certain definitions in the Act. I refer, for instance, to the definition of the various types of motor vehicle that will now be permitted on the road. It is debatable whether this is good or bad, because all sorts of contraptions can be driven on the road. This type of provision is necessary when one considers the activities that are pursued off the road but in areas that are classified as roadway. I refer, for example, to land yachts, which I assume would be included under the definition. A small association uses a part of a beach to race these land yachts, and I therefore hope that they are covered once and for all.

Much has been said about clause 9, which provides for the recovery of the cost of installing and maintaining traffic control devices from the owners of businesses that necessitate the installation of such devices. In 1970 or 1971, I asked a question in the House regarding the tremendous traffic problems that were caused on Anzac Highway directly opposite the K-Mart shopping centre. One part of the highway is represented by the Minister, the other part being within my district. After months of investigation by the Road Traffic Board and the local council, the traffic island opposite the entrance to the shopping centre was closed and certain other alterations made. As this placed the council and the Highways Department at some expense, it was only fair and reasonable that K-Mart should have met the cost.

Whether they relate to traffic lights or alterations to the construction of roads, loopholes will obviously exist in planning provisions to enable developers to take full advantage of the situation obtaining. Therefore, in planning future developments, we should consider the road traffic problems that could be created. In this respect, one of the problems that comes to mind is the industrial complex in the Salisbury-Elizabeth area, which is being developed by the Housing Trust; many factories are being established and hundreds of workers are being put into an area that is poorly served by traffic control devices. I can foresee tremendous problems occurring on Main North Road, where employees will turn into and out of this industrial complex.

This sort of situation has been highlighted in my district, where the Government Printing Office, Public Buildings Department and Lands Department have all been housed in a complex at Netley; 500 or 600 employees have therefore been put into a small area. Just about all those employees has a vehicle and, rather than drive along the busy main arterial road, they travel along the minor suburban streets upsetting residents and creating tremendous traffic and environmental problems. When dealing with any development, be it an industrial development or a major shopping complex, consideration must be given to increased traffic flow, the effect it will have on the surrounding area, and. what effect the installation of traffic lights will have. If it is in the immediate vicinity, the installation should be the responsibility of the developer. Associated with a $5 000 000 shopping complex development at Glenelg is the need for traffic lights at the junction of Brighton and Jetty Roads, but, because of the siting of the complex, traffic lights will be required also at the intersection of Augusta Street and Brighton Road. I believe that the developers know that they could be responsible for the

cost of those lights. It is in their interests that the lights be installed and suitably phased to allow traffic flow into Brighton Road and Augusta Street, which will be the main entrance to the complex.

Because of this clause, I understand that the council and the Road Traffic Board will be able to tell the developers that, because of the siting of the entrance and the large car-parking facilities to be provided, they will be liable for the cost of the lights that are necessary to control the traffic flow. I cannot see anything wrong with that situation: these are the prices we have to pay for allowing uncontrolled development that has created tremendous problems. Much has been said about "stop" signs and signs at intersections, but I have been concerned about the situation on major highways on which roadworks are being undertaken. The speed limit on these roads is 110 kilometres an hour. With a gang working on these roads a reasonable amount of warning can be given that roadworks are ahead, but often a speedster will scream past the men. Highways Department men are not adequately protected, whether working on roads in the city or in the country. "Stop" signs may be displayed, but they must be reinforced by adequate pre-warning signs, and I believe that a much lower speed limit should be provided for motor vehicles as they pass gangs at work. There has been a deficiency for some time in this aspect of our road safety. Clause 10 up-dates the existing legislation in relation to people exhibiting "stop" signs, and this applies mainly to pedestrian and school crossings.

Clause 13 amends section 43, which deals with the power of the police to stop a vehicle and ask specific questions of the driver; the clause will allow any questions to be asked. Under the present legislation the person stopped and questioned is reasonably protected, but under the amendment the police can ask any questions, because there is no limit to the number and type of question or the time questioning can take. I can contemplate the situation in which an over-zealous policeman could detain a person unnecessarily. I refer to a person who one evening was stopped on his front lawn by a policeman and asked for his driving licence. He was not asked his name and address. The person believed that his licence was in the glove box of his car and went to it, but the licence was not there. He then walked towards the front door of his house in order to go inside for the licence, but the policeman apprehended him. The person reached out to press the front doorbell to let his family know that he wanted to contact them, but the wire door was jammed on to his arm and the policeman manhandled him on his property.

Fortunately, the man's family then came out, but he was given no chance to explain or produce his licence. He was then taken to the nearest police station. Oh the way the constable who made the arrest asked his partner, "What was the number of the car?" The person relating the story to me said that he flatly refused to answer any questions. At the station he was asked to submit to a breathalyser test, and agreed to do so, but the sergeant on duty at the station said that it was a waste of time. However, the constable insisted and, whilst he was waiting for the breathalyser, the person was placed in a cell, fingerprinted, and his possessions taken from him. The breath test revealed a minor reading that did not exceed the limit allowed. This person was eventually charged with a speeding offence, which he believed was impossible to defend: he could not prove that he was not speeding, because it was a matter of two to one.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must relate his remarks to a specific clause.

Mr. BECKER: I am questioning the right of police to ask any questions they wish. Under the present Act a policeman can ask specific questions, and I am trying to illustrate a situation in which an over-zealous policeman (and there would probably be only 1 per cent) would take the questioning too far. In the instance to which I have referred I believe an injustice was done. Because of our laws, a person apprehended usually pleads guilty and pays the penalty, because he cannot afford the cost of defending himself. A motorist alone in the car does not have much chance when apprehended by two policemen. There must be rights in the community, and I am questioning the inclusion of this clause, which allows unlimited questioning. I think this aspect of our laws has been overlooked and, concerning civil liberties, it is time we considered closely some of our legislation. It is all very well to have increased controls in our laws in the interests of road safety, but we have to protect the rights of those we represent in this House.

It is interesting to note the alteration in relation to turning at intersections, irrespective of the number of signs displayed. This problem mainly involves motorists from other States, but one frequently sees breaches of the rules in Glenelg and West Beach. I am pleased to know that that situation will be tightened up: I hope the Minister's department will see that adequate publicity is given to amendments to legislation and that motorists are informed of changes made. Over the years, many changes have been made in road traffic legislation, and periodically a little slip of paper accompanies the renewal of a driving licence, but that is about all. Half the people find out about the changes only when they are pulled up by a police officer, and even then there is a reasonable chance' that the officer is not too sure of the current provisions.

Clause 42 re-enacts a provision in relation to the wearing of safety helmets by motor cyclists. We will not know, when we pass this legislation, what our standards will be or what designs will be accepted for safety helmets. Some types are unsatisfactory, and some are more likely to inflict damage than to offer protection. I hope the regulations will stipulate satisfactory standards and that an Australia-wide standard will be agreed to by the Australian Transport Advisory Council. I do not know what type of certificate of inspection will be supplied or where it must be placed in the vehicle, and I cannot see why such detail could not have been incorporated in the Bill. I realise that the registration certificate is covered by regulations, but it is most important that the inspection certificate should be displayed. It is all very well for the police and the owner or driver to know that a vehicle has passed an inspection, but passengers using the vehicle should be able to see the certificate so that, when they board it, they know it has passed the necessary inspection. If we are to legislate to protect people who travel on buses, those people should know that the vehicle on which they are riding is safe.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 7 passed.

Clause 8—"Cost of traffic control devices."

Mr. MATHWIN: Can the Minister give some idea of the cost to local government of traffic control devices? What inquiries has he made to ascertain what the cost will be?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Transport): I do not know how anyone could give that information. Obviously, the cost in which councils will be involved will be determined by the number of traffic control devices

within each council area. This will vary from place to place. Traffic control devices are installed where the greatest need exists and, while one council may have half a dozen installed in its area, an adjoining council may not put in any.

Mr. Mathwin: There is maintenance, too.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That is right. I do not know how anyone could possibly say what expense will be involved for local government in these circumstances.

Clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 19 passed.

Clause 20—"Duty at stop signs."

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I. move:

In new subsection (2*b*), after "the face of", to insert "the sign shall not permit".

A typographical error has been discovered, and the amendment simply rectifies that error.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 21 to 37 passed.

Clause 38—"Maximum weights." .

Mr. BLACKER: What is the purpose of this provision? Must two wheels of a vehicle be over the limit before a prosecution can be made?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: New subsection (2*a)* simply makes a provision that did not previously exist. It provides that the aggregate weight on the individual axles can be taken as the total weight.

Mr. BLACKER: In the case of a bogie set-up, can there be 10 tonnes on one axle and 6 tonnes on the other and, because they average out to the allowable maximum, the load is still permitted?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: No. One is still bound by the maximum of 8 tonnes an axle on the road.

Clause passed.

Clauses 39 to 42 passed.

Clause 43—"Enactment of heading and sections 163a to 163i of principal Act."

Mr. MATHWIN: In my second reading speech, I referred to the previously existing problem in respect of the inspection of vehicles. Again, in another debate, I brought this matter to the Minister's attention, and suggested that the six-monthly inspection of these vehicles was inadequate. I pointed out that heavy trucks and buses travelling interstate could travel between 60 000 km and 100 000 km in a six-monthly period, and it would be far more advantageous if vehicles were inspected after they had travelled a specific distance. If the Government was really interested in the safety of such vehicles, especially of buses travelling on interstate routes from Adelaide to Brisbane, Cairns, Perth or other destinations, it would accept that such vehicles could travel many thousands of kilometres in six months.

Much would be gained by having inspections undertaken on a distance basis, rather than on the basis of a six-monthly period. The Minister knows, and he will agree, that many vehicles travel long distances in one month. How many kilometres can vehicles travel in six months? If the Minister is really interested in this problem, and as a result of debate on another Bill, I am sure he would by now have considered it. I referred to this matter earlier this evening, and I believe the Minister could have at least replied to the points I raised on the second reading. I am most disappointed that the Minister has not seen fit to do so. What are the views of the Minister and of his department on this matter?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: We are trying to introduce a system that will apply throughout Australia. In such cases we sometimes must enact provisions which, if we were acting unilaterally, we might not enact. The general approach to this matter is based principally on time. I acknowledge the point the honourable member has raised. One vehicle could travel only 1 000 km in six months, whereas another vehicle could travel 20 000 km in the same time. However, after taking the average, and from experience in other places, I understand that periodical inspections are considered satisfactory. It is for these reasons that this decision has been taken. However, any of these provisions can be reviewed from time to time, and my principal objective at this stage is to get a proper testing authority established so that, hopefully, we can prevent any further serious accidents. If it is desirable later to amend certain provisions we can certainly do that.

Mr. BOUNDY: I refer to new section 163c (1) *(b),* which provides:

Any vehicle that plies for hire or reward . . .

Is a primary producer carrying his own produce required to have his vehicle inspected under this provision?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: This provision applies only to passenger-carrying vehicles.

Mr. MATHWIN: I am most disappointed by the Minister's answer on this matter. We discussed periodical inspections fully in the last session. The Minister has said that this matter is not important, and that we must ensure relativity between the States. Yet the Minister has also admitted that there are cases where heavy trucks and buses travel interstate and cover a considerable distance in six months. How far would a bus travel if it travelled from Adelaide to Alice Springs two or three times a month? What condition would that bus be in after completing those journeys? Does the Minister suggest that a bus, after having completed three such journeys, would be in a safe condition to undertake further work without an inspection? Does he suggest that the Coober Pedy road and other outback roads in South Australia are of such standard that a bus could complete that many journeys and not require inspection? If the Minister was really concerned to increase the safety of our roads and to reduce the carnage on those roads he would admit that he had made a mistake in respect of this matter. The Minister must admit that he did not listen to the last debate on a similar Bill, because he has done nothing whatever to improve the situation. The Minister is now playing Pontius Pilate by waving his hands about and saying, "As long as all the States agree on this legislation it is good enough for me. Perhaps we can amend the Bill in a few months." If that is good enough for the Minister, it certainly is not good enough for me.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Why don't you oppose it altogether and be done with it if you don't want it?

Mr. MATHWIN: It is not a matter of not wanting an inspection. The Minister is backing away on this suggestion, because he knows he is on shaky ground. He failed the State when at a conference of State Ministers of Transport he failed to put forward this proposition. I am disappointed that the Minister is backing away completely. Even though he heard the previous debate on this matter, as well as this evening's debate, he has not seen fit to reply to any of the points made.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Why don't you tell the truth?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MATHWIN: The Minister did not reply to the debate this evening.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: What clause are you on?

Mr. MATHWIN: Clause 43, which relates to inspections. The Minister of Education should be most interested in this clause because of the terrible catastrophe that affected so many of his constituents 18 months ago.

Mr. Langley: What are you talking about?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Unley is out of order.

Mr. MATHWIN: That is the area we should consider. I am disappointed that the Minister has not seen fit to support my suggestion, but I hope he will do so at the earliest opportunity. He has seen fit to make a lame excuse by not taking note of the previous debate or this evening's debate.

Clause passed.

Clause 44 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (GENERAL)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 20. Page 2493.)

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): I support the Bill, which amends various schedules dealing with the points demerit scheme.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (ADMINISTRATION)

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Local Government) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Local Government Act, 1934-1974. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

It makes many important amendments to the Local Government Act. The amendments are designed to improve local government administration and conduce to efficiency in the employment of local government resources. Most of the amendments arise from representations of individual councils, regional local government associations, the Local Government Association, and the Local Government Women's Association. Clause 1 is a formal provision. Clause 2 alters the section dealing with the arrangement of the Act because of later amendments. Clause 3 extends the exemptions from the definition of ratable property to include centres for the rehabilitation of persons addicted to drugs and/or alcohol. In addition, the definition of "urban farmland" is amended by deleting the qualification relating to the minimum area of the land. Some plant nurseries operate on areas of less than 0.809 hectares. Clauses 4, 5, and 7 update the provisions of the Act to substitute references to "Australian citizen" for the old reference to "naturalised British subjects". This amendment arises from recent Commonwealth legislation.

Clauses 6, 13, 21, 26, 50, 62 and 63 amend the provisions relating to the voting rights of ratepayers at council elections. Generally, the provisions enable the occupiers and the spouse of occupiers to be included in the assessment book and be enrolled for voting at council elections and polls. Section 115 removes multiple voting rights and provides that each person whose name appears on the voters' roll shall be entitled to one vote at an election or poll. These amendments have been requested by several councils and by the Local Government Women's Association. In addition, it has been necessary for amendments to be made because groups of homes, for example, homes for the elderly, are commonly included in one assessment. Hence, there has been some disfranchisement of persons who should have a right to vote. The amendments will rectify this anomaly.

Clause 8 amends section 133 to provide that a how-Lo-vote card can be defined in regulations. Regulations will be prepared to provide that a how-to-vote card shall accord, in general, with the provisions in the Electoral Act. Clause 9 amends section 155 by making it possible for an inspection of the minutes of a council to be made without payment of a fee. In addition, a new subsection is included that will enable a council to place on public display a copy of minutes of the council. Clause 10 adds a further subsection to section 157 that provides that the town or district clerk is to be the chief executive officer of a council.

Clause 11 enables a council, by resolution, to fix one day each year as a holiday for its employees. Clause 12 repeals Part IXB of the Act relating to the Local Government Officers Classification Board. Local government salaries are now fixed by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, and the classification board has not operated for a number of years. Clauses 14, 15 and 32 amend sections 178b, 180 and 257 by empowering a council to carry out certain portions of an assessment where the Valuer-General certifies that he is not able to do so. In addition, the clauses provide that a council is not required to forward an assessment notice to an owner or occupier of ratable property where a Government assessment has been adopted. The Valuer-General is required to forward an assessment notice to owners and occupiers where he has made an assessment. This will not, however, exempt a council from the requirement to forward an assessment notice where it makes part of the assessment itself in accordance with the new provisions.

Clause 16 amends section 214 to provide that a council is able to expend revenue raised from the differential rates throughout the council area. Some doubt has previously existed in this respect. Clauses 17 and 18 amend section 221 and repeal section 222. The amendments relate to the method of apportioning costs of works carried out by a memorial. The existing provisions are not always equitable, and it is considered that the council should have the option of declaring a special rate, or requiring lump-sum contributions from the ratepayers who derive benefit from the special works. Clauses 19 and 64 make metric conversions.

Clauses 20, 22 to 25, 27, 28, 30 and 31 amend the sections of the Act relating to the maximum amount in the dollar that a council may declare as the rate to be based on annual values or land values. The sections repeal the maximum rates prescribed by the Act. A council will in future, be able to declare a rate in the dollar without restriction. Some councils currently have a rate that is on or near the maximum currently permitted by the Act. Clause 29 repeals the existing section 224a of the Act with regard to rating of urban farmland. The amendments provide for a compulsory remission of rates in respect of urban farmland. The amount of the remission can, however, be recovered if the land ceases to be urban farmland. The provisions in this respect are analogous to the existing provisions of the Land Tax Act.

Clause 33 amends section 259 by removing the fine of 5 per cent and providing that the fine may be fixed by the Minister by notice published in the *Government Gazette.* Such a fine would generally be published annually before

July 1. The fine will consist of an interest rate 1 per cent above the present bank overdraft rates. Besides being published in the *Government Gazette,* each council will be notified by the Minister of the interest rate that will be applicable during the ensuing 12 months. In addition, a new subsection (1*a*) is included in section 259. This provides that a council should add interest on the amount outstanding for each month. The interest would be added on the first day of each month. The first interest would be added on December 1 or March 1, as the case may require. Subsequent additions of interest would be added to the total outstanding on the first day of each subsequent month.

Clause 34 amends section 267a by providing for a council to postpone the payment of any amount due to the council. At present the section relates only to rates. In addition to this, the provisions are extended to enable the council to postpone the payment of amounts that have been outstanding since some date preceding the present financial year. Some confusion has arisen in this regard, and some people have been disfranchised at council elections because, after the amounts have been outstanding for one financial year, they are deemed to be in arrears. A further subsection is included in the section enabling a council to obtain evidence in respect of an application for postponement. The council can require an applicant to verify the matters on which his application is based on oath or by statutory declaration. This provision has always existed in respect of the remission of rates by a council.

Clause 35 repeals section 267b and inserts a new section. In effect, the new section provides for a council to remit the rates in respect of organisations providing homes for persons in necessitous circumstances, or for the aged. The other provisions of the existing section will be carried forward in the new section. Clauses 36, 37, and 38 relate to the provisions that empower a council to sell land for the non-payment of rates. Section 272 is amended to provide that, when a council advertises its intention of selling a property for non-payment of rates, it shall also advertise the amount of Crown rates and taxes outstanding at the time of the sale. Section 277 is repealed. In section 279 new provisions are included providing for the disbursement of the money received from the sale of land. An additional subsection is added to provide that the liability in respect of Crown rates or taxes shall only be diminished to the extent permitted by the distribution of the purchase money as outlined. The new owner would thus be liable for any balance of Crown rates and taxes outstanding after the disbursement of the purchase money.

Clause 39 amends section 286 in two ways. First, the amount that a council is able to expend from petty cash is increased from $10 to $20. Consequential amendment is made to the provisions relating to the amount that a council is required to pay by cheque. The second amendment relates to the retention by the council of an advance account and, in fact, removes the requirement for such an account. New provisions are included to enable a council, by resolution, to authorise either generally or specifically, payments from any of its banking accounts. Where the council has authorised payments, the clerk shall submit a schedule to each meeting providing details of all payments made between meetings. A consequential amendment is made to subsection (6).

Clause 40 inserts a new paragraph (f 7) in section 287. The new provision enables a council to expend revenue by subscribing towards the cost of establishing or maintaining a library within the area of the council. This will enable councils to provide the funds for the maintenance of a community/school/library complex. Paragraph (j 1) of section 287 is also amended. The amendment enables a council to provide trees to persons for planting within the area. The present provision enables a council to provide trees only for schools or places of public resort within the area.

Clause 41 inserts a new section 287c in the Act. This section will enable councils to expend revenue for the provision of child care centres. The provision also empowers a council to establish, manage, and operate such centres. This provision arises from the fact that the Australian Government's child care scheme enables local government bodies to participate in the scheme. Clause 42 amends section 289 by providing an additional power to district councils. This power enables a district council to spend revenue in providing a salary or subsidy to assist a veterinary surgeon practising within the district. Clause 43 amends section 319, in respect of the amount a metre that a council is able to recover in respect of roadworks, kerbing, and similar works. The amount is increased from $3.25 a metre to $5.00 a metre.

Clause 44 amends section 328 in respect of footpath charges. The amount is increased from $1 a metre to $1.50 a metre. The amendments proposed by clauses 43 and 44 are in relation to land that was subdivided before the implementation of the Planning and Development Act, 1966-67.

Clause 45 repeals the existing section 364 of the Act and inserts a new section in its place. The effect of the new section is to update the phraseology of the existing section and in addition to provide that a council may construct, maintain, manage, and operate, in addition to the other works and undertakings that have previously been permitted, buildings and structures upon, across, over or under any public street or road within the area. The new provisions will continue to be subject to Ministerial consent.

Clause 46 makes similar changes to section 365 of the Act. The new provisions of section 365 will enable a council, acting with Ministerial approval, to grant a permit to any person to construct, maintain or operate, buildings or structures upon public roads. The new subsection (2a) in the section enables a council to charge an annual fee in respect of any permit granted pursuant to this section. Clause 47 repeals subsection (1) of section 365b and inserts a new subsection. The effect of the new subsection is to enable a council to authorise a person to erect a letterbox upon any public street or road in the area. Consequential amendments are made to other subsections.

Clause 48 amends section 383. The effect of the amendment is to enable councils to borrow for the preparation of plans relating to the planning and development of the area. Clauses 49 and 51 amend sections 426 and 430 to provide that where a council is borrowing to repay a loan it is not necessary for a notice of intention to borrow to be advertised nor for an order to be issued. The amendments facilitate this form of borrowing by a council.

Clause 52 amends section 435 of the Act by providing that a scheme submitted to the Minister for his authorisation no longer needs to be reproductive or revenue earning. There are instances where it is necessary for a council to assist an organisation providing community services, for example, St. John Ambulance, civil defence or E.F.S. brigades. Such a scheme would not necessarily be revenue earning or reproductive. The amendment also extends the provisions to enable a council to participate in schemes which are generally for the benefit of the area, notwithstanding the fact that the land on which

a permanent work or undertaking is being constructed or carried out on is not owned by the council.

Clause 53 amends section 449 of the Act to provide that a council is able to exceed the overdraft limit set by that section subject to Ministerial approval. Subsection (5), which is now redundant, is repealed. Clause 54 adds a new subsection to section 530c. This provides that borrowings under section 530c shall not be taken into account for the purpose of ascertaining whether the limits set by section 424 have been exceeded. It seems inappropriate for such borrowings to be taken into account because generally a common effluent drainage scheme is self-financing.

Clauses 55, 56, 57 and 58 amend various sections in relation to the establishment of hospitals. The effect of the amendments is to remove areas of conflict between the planning and development regulations and the existing provisions of the Act. In addition to this the definition of "private hospital" is varied to harmonise with the definition contained in the Health Act. The provisions result in the fact that where planning and development regulations are in existence these shall take precedence over the provisions contained in the Local Government Act.

Clauses 59, 60 and 61 amend the provisions of the Act relating to the disposal of abandoned vehicles and the existing litter provisions. Section 666 is repealed by clause 59 and section 783 is repealed by clause 61. A new Part is included in the Act by clause 60 which incorporates the substance of these provisions. In addition to this, the new provisions increase the maximum penalty for depositing litter from $200 to $500. As a number of councils have been enforcing litter provisions at a loss, a provision is included that the courts shall, on application by the council, order the convicted to pay the council the costs incurred in cleaning up litter. Definitions of "litter" and "public place" have been incorporated in the new provisions. An evidentiary provision is inserted to facilitate proof of the identity of a person who has unlawfully deposited litter.

The new section 748b relates to the disposal of abandoned vehicles. The procedures which a council is required to follow are varied so that simultaneous action can be taken with respect to the issue of a notice to the owner and the publication of the notice in newspapers circulating generally in the State. The owner is able to claim the vehicle within 14 days of the date of this notice and is required to pay all expenses of the council in connection with the removal and custody of the vehicle. If the vehicle is not claimed the council is then able to dispose of it. The existing provisions relating to the disbursement of any proceeds of the sale are included. A new provision is included which enables a council to sell or otherwise dispose of a vehicle without following any of the above provisions where the council is of the opinion that the vehicle is of little or no value and appears to have been abandoned. In some cases the value of a vehicle is so slight that it would not realize enough to cover the cost to the council of following the present procedures.

Mr. RUSSACK secured the adjournment of the debate.

TEACHER HOUSING AUTHORITY BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from March 6. Page 2736.)

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I support the Bill. Last year I asked the Minister of Education questions relating to the establishment of a teacher housing authority in South Australia. On those occasions he was cagey, as he usually is when the Opposition seeks information about the possible introduction of legislation. This Bill has been introduced at short notice and, as usual with the Minister, members are expected to debate it at short notice. The Bill was introduced last Thursday, and today the Opposition is expected to come to terms with the Bill, complete its research and debate the matter. If the Minister were to adopt such an attitude in the Victorian Parliament his colleagues there would complain bitterly if the Liberal Government treated the Labor Opposition in the way the Minister treats Opposition members here.

This measure has been introduced in response to an increasing housing need in South Australia, as the Minister acknowledged in his second reading explanation. However, the increased housing need is not the only reason for the Bill. In South Australia, especially in country areas, there is a pressing necessity to upgrade teacher housing. Probably the most frequent complaint from teachers newly appointed to country schools (and this applies to teachers from headmasters down to junior assistants) relates to suitable housing. From my own experience in visiting some of these houses, especially those accommodating headmasters, I know they leave much to be desired. True, attempts have been made to improve this situation over the years, but it has been a slow process.

The Minister has said that there has been an increase in the number of teachers of, I think, about 25 per cent. This has been a result of the Government's desire to reduce the pupil-teacher load. The Premier has often trumpeted loudly about the big achievements of his Government in health and education. He has mentioned those two areas at every opportunity, even in the most inappropriate circumstances. Of course, the achievement has been that the number of teachers and teacher-aides has been increased significantly, and that also applies to the nursing staff in Government hospitals.

The SPEAKER: Order! We are dealing with a specific Bill.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I shall confine myself to the terms of the Bill, which specifically concern teacher housing. The Government has given other benefits: the Minister has entered into consent agreements and the like, and it is refreshing that some teachers have rejected the 17½ per cent leave loading. However, I will not deal with that matter.

The SPEAKER: Order! Nothing in the Bill refers to the 17½ per cent loading.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I will come back to the matter in hand, but that rejection was pleasing, particularly to the public at large. There is a changing pattern of demand by teachers in South Australia for housing. From inquiries I have made, I have found that this pattern is Australia-wide. Single teachers, when posted to country schools, are no longer satisfied to board with lonely widows and similar people who in the past have sought to board teachers. Now there is more demand for rental-type housing, and I think it true to say that, in response to that demand, the States are trying to increase the number of flats available for single teachers.

I know from conversations I have had that this legislation will be welcomed by the South Australian Institute of Teachers and members of the teaching profession generally. As the Minister has said in his explanation, the current allocation of Loan funds is inadequate to satisfy the greatly increased demand being made at present. I understand that only 30 new dwellings can be provided throughout

the whole State at present, and obviously that number is inadequate to cater for the demand.

In the short time the Minister has allowed us to consider this Bill (from Thursday until today), I have inquired of other States. Of course, I normally go to my district office on Friday, and yesterday was a public holiday in Victoria, so I had to inquire of that State today. This evening I have found that similar legislation has been before the New South Wales Parliament recently. In the limited time the Minister has given us to consider the Bill, I have obtained what I hope is a fairly competent view of the position in the other States.

Western Australia was the first State to introduce legislation of this kind, and it did so in 1964. The scope of the authority there is somewhat wider than is proposed in this State. It is referred to as the Government Employees Housing Authority and it is concerned with housing Government employees in all except, I think, four State Government departments. I think the exceptions are the Department of Main Roads, the Department of Forests (I understand that it is necessary to erect houses for that department, because forestry is a big industry there), the Electricity Commission, and certain medical officers.

The authority in Western Australia has considerably wider- scope than is contemplated in this Bill or than that undertaken in New South Wales and Victoria. It comprises five persons, namely, the Public Service Commissioner, the Under Treasurer, the Director-General of Education, the General Manager of the Housing Commission, and a tenant representative. The Act was amended in 1973 to provide for the appointment of the tenant representative. Our Bill provides for the Minister to appoint a representative after consulting the Institute of Teachers. Of course, in Western Australia the selection of the tenant representative is made from a wider field, because the authority covers more departments.

I understand that this is the case in Victoria also. Tn that State, although the authority comprises only three persons, one is a teacher representative. The Western Australian authority can borrow $500 000 outside Loan funds. I understand that it has borrowed $2 000 000 from the Superannuation Board in that State and the Treasurer of Western Australia controls the borrowing programmes stringently. Last year $3 110 000 was made available to the Western Australian authority. The operation of that authority does not seem to me to be particularly efficient.

Mr. Keneally: Under a Liberal Government?

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: That authority has operated during the terms of office of Labor Governments in that State, so we will not become too excited about to which Government we will impute blame for any inefficiency in that authority. However, a large Government subsidy is paid annually (and the amount of subsidy is increasing) to underwrite the operations of the authority. It has been estimated that the rent for each house in a near-country area in Western Australia would need to be $35 a week if the operation of the authority was to be anywhere near self supporting. In other words, to service interest payments, etc., on borrowings, the authority would need to charge that amount of rent. The maximum rent payable has been $12 a week until now, and I understand that the rent will be increased on March 16 to a maximum of $16.50 a week.

The Government subsidy to the authority has been estimated at $1 000 a year for each house provided, so one can see from those figures that the operation in Western Australia does not seem to be particularly efficient. The Government underwrites the authority heavily. The Western Australian authority provides single flats. In Western Australia, which is larger than South Australia, the authority has to provide furnished houses in the North-West because, obviously, furniture cannot be carted to and fro when employees are transferred to and from the North-West. Obviously, such operations would be more expensive than one would expect in a State the size of South Australia.

The authority also provides furnished flat accommodation. It experimented with housing several schoolteachers in the one house, but that did not prove altogether successful. The tenants are charged $6 a week, and $2 is charged for the furniture in furnished flats. The Western Australian Housing Commission also acts as agent for the authority. The authority has a small staff, comprising a secretary and three other officers, who operate the authority but who are housed within the commission and they use the commission's facilities (such as acting as an agent for a fee). The fees paid to the Western Australian commission last year amounted to $151 000. Obviously, the staff of the commission, although its operations are vast, is small. The authority uses the Housing Commission's expertise.

I discovered late this afternoon that legislation currently before the New South Wales Parliament (or I suspect that it has been passed recently) establishes a New South Wales Teacher Housing Authority. This authority will cater for more teachers than we have in South Australia, and it seems to me that New South Wales has drafted its legislation on the Western Australian model. The New South Wales authority is to consist of five representatives, and its Bill spells out the authority's financial operations in far greater detail than does the Bill of any other State. Several pages of the New South Wales draft Bill are given over to Part IV, dealing with finance, which runs into about six or more pages. This large Part is given over to the borrowings, issuing of debentures, borrowing outside of the State, and the setting up of reserve funds against each separate borrowing transaction. A most complex part of the Bill deals with the finance that will be made available to the Teacher Housing Authority; it refers to borrowing not only outside the State, but even in another country.

The Bill now before us seems to be modelled closely on the Victorian legislation, which, from inquiries I have made, seems to operate successfully. The Victorian legislation was introduced in 1970, after the Victorian authorities had studied the Western Australian legislation. It seems desirable that our authority should have wide borrowing powers. The Victorian authority, which has these wide powers, deals largely with its own properties. The operation of the Victorian authority is concerned with properties that it owns. The authority consists of three representatives, including the Director of the Department of Housing. The control of the authority was removed from the Minister of Education by a recent amendment and placed under the control of the Minister of Housing when his department was established, I think in about 1973. The other two representatives are the Director of Co-operative Housing and Building Society (a private enterprise man) and a teacher representative.

As in the case of the Western Australian authority, the Victorian rents do not cover costs. The average rent has been $6.70 a week, recently increased to $7.80 a week. It is suggested that an average rent of $13 a week, with a minimum of $6 a week and a maximum of $20 a week, would enable the Victorian authority to pay its way, whereas Western Australia would need a

rent of about $35 a week to make its operation viable. It would appear that, from those figures, as the Victorian distances are less than those in Western Australia, which is larger than Victoria, the Victorian operation appears to be more efficient than the Western Australian operation. The Victorian authority uses the Housing Commission's expertise. The commission, which is heavily involved in development projects, often engages private contractors for housing in country areas. It is interesting to note that the commission has ordered Atco Structures Proprietary Limited, of Elizabeth, to provide prefabricated flat-type accommodation for teachers in Kaniva.

The commission seeks out the most suitable accommodation available and the authority deals directly with people in the private sector, particularly in the country, where fewer houses are needed. No doubt, the authority uses the commission's services when many houses are needed in the one area. The Victorian authority's staff is somewhat larger than the Western Australian authority's staff: it consists of a Secretary, together with eight male and two female officers. Six of the males undertake desk work and two are field co-ordinators. The Victorian authority does not rely so heavily on the Housing Commission for its operations, being involved not only with the commission but also with private contractors. As in the case of South Australia and Western Australia, Victoria is moving more and more into flat development, as required.

One suggested weakness in the Victorian legislation (and I should not be surprised if an amendment were to be moved soon) is that the rents for the accommodation the authority provides are fixed by the Teachers Salaries Tribunal. I think it is freely acknowledged that the expertise of the tribunal lies in the salary field. The Victorian Teacher Housing Authority is not empowered to fix rents: they are fixed by the tribunal after consultation with the housing authority. This is said to be a weakness, but such a procedure is not provided for in the legislation now before us. Our authority will be empowered to fix rents on guidelines laid down by the Minister. It seems to me that the Secretary of the Victorian housing authority, as a result of the scant inquiries I was able to make this morning, seems to be a man who has been involved in private enterprise in the past. It seemed to me that the emphasis in Victoria was on trying to provide good quality housing and, if possible, to make the project self-supporting. In other words, it made strenuous efforts to ensure that rents would not get out of hand, but at the same time that the Victorian public would not have to underwrite heavily the operations of the Teacher Housing Authority. Certainly, Victoria has got much closer to this goal than has Western Australia, although there may be good reasons for that. What the Victorians are trying to do seems to me to be laudable.

This Government has not shown any great propensity for or skill in initiating operations that it hopes will be self-supporting. Nevertheless, I trust that the Minister, in administering this legislation, will have that as one of his aims. One can think of this Government's patronage of the arts, and the demise of Theatre 62 as an instance of the way in which money has been poured down the drain. I certainly hope that the operation of this legislation in South Australia will emulate the record of the Victorians.

I refer now to the South Australian Bill. Under clause 8, the Governor is empowered to determine the allowances and expenses of the authority. It is spelt out in the Western Australian legislation that Public Service allowances for travelling and accommodation will apply to members of the authority, and the same applies in Victoria. There must be good reason (better than is apparent to me) for providing that the Governor shall determine what allowances and expenses will be paid to members of the authority. The Government seems to be tending towards this type of provision, under which more and more is determined by the Governor and less and less is determined by the Parliament. Of course, when one says that something shall be determined by the Governor, one really means the Government, as opposed to Parliament. This is a move that seems to be accelerating under the present Administration: to take more and more away from the Parliament and put more and more in the hands of the Government.

The clauses do not require much comment. The weakness in the Victorian legislation is that its authority cannot fix rents. If teachers or tenants are represented on the authority, their voice should be heard; if there is to be a representative of the Institute of Teachers, we are doing the right thing. Under clause 13 (2) (*g*), the authority can fix, on criteria approved by the Minister, rents payable by occupants of houses owned by or under the control of the authority, and collect such rents. Clause 15 does not make clear what the situation will be regarding houses that are currently occupied by teachers. However, the Minister will probably be able easily to clear up that aspect. Clause 15 (1) provides:

> Upon payment of consideration recommended by the Treasurer, the Minister shall transfer to the authority all his interest in any land, which for the purpose of providing housing for teachers is held by him or under his control.

Unless there is another provision that has escaped my attention, I do not know what will happen regarding existing houses, as this refers solely to land held for the purpose of providing houses. The corresponding Victorian provision (clause 14) seems to be clear. It provides:

> Forthwith upon the coming into operation of this Act, all land vested in the Minister of Education for providing housing accommodation of teachers and all houses on land of the Crown that are under the management or control of the Education Department for providing housing accommodation of teachers, and all powers, authorities, rights, interest and obligation in the same or with respect thereto, shall by virtue of this Act and without any transfer or assignment whatever pass to and become vested in and imposed upon the authority and be divested and discharged from the Minister of Education.

I have not found any clause in this Bill that matches the Victorian provision. This seems to be a vague area of the Bill. In other words, the Victorian Minister has handed over to the authority all matters relating to housing, and it will be its responsibility to take charge of and administer all matters pertaining to the housing of teachers in that State. However, our Bill does not seem to provide that. There are wide borrowing powers in our Bill, and that is indeed desirable and necessary if we are to set up this authority and hope that it can achieve autonomy and pay its way within a few years.

I notice that in the debates in the New South Wales Parliament a query was raised whether the legislation would inhibit borrowing by those people who normally borrowed from the Superannuation Fund in order to buy their own houses. I do not know where the South Australian authority will obtain its funds; perhaps it will raise a substantial loan from the Superannuation Fund. Nevertheless, I hope it will not prevent teachers (many of whom, when they go to the city, want to purchase their own houses) from turning to the Superannuation Fund to obtain loans on reasonable terms, because this is a real service that the fund has provided. It is well

known that one of the aims of the Liberal Party is to encourage people to own their own homes. This is a desirable social end, and people should be encouraged to do so.

Clause 19 refers to the establishment and control of the fund. Subclause (2) (*a*) refers to moneys from time to time appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of the legislation. An increasing subsidy must be paid into the Western Australian fund annually; I hope that will not be necessary here. Clause 22 is the audit provision and is straightforward. Clause 23 appeals to the Opposition, as it indicates the desirability of and necessity for annual reports to be made to the Minister and for such reports to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

This is a good Bill, the counterpart of which is working successfully in Victoria. It is obviously wanted by this State's teachers, and the need for upgrading teacher housing is pressing. All workers in this State, not just the wealthy about whom the Premier used to speak so much, pay a heavy burden of State taxation and, in fairness to and in the interests of people from all walks of life, I hope the Minister will do all in his power to ensure that this authority becomes self-supporting. If it does not, it could become a heavy burden on taxpayers, who will be expected to subsidise the rents of houses provided for teachers. J believe the operations of the Housing Trust have been most laudable, as the trust has tried to pay its way. There has been a social service aspect in the operations of the trust in which the trust has subsidised the rents of pensioners and similar people, and I applaud that action. However, the overall philosophy underlying the operations of the trust has been that the trust provide housing and still make a go of it. It would be unfair if the taxpayers of the State were asked to underwrite heavily the rents of teachers throughout the State. I say that in all sincerity, and trust that the operations of this authority will be such that this will not be expected of the people of South Australia. With those remarks, I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): In speaking to this Bill, I am conscious that we are referring to a subject. that affects a profession in which, generally in the past few years, some very vocal people have attacked the Party to which I belong. They have not done it directly but have used indirect methods which I think partly affected the 1970 election result and which achieved success for the Australian Labor Party. I am amazed when I peruse a Bill like this. In this State we have a Land Commission with the right to buy land, subdivide it, sell it, develop it, lease it, and rent it, for the benefit of the total community. That is what we were told when the Bill establishing the commission was introduced. The Monarto Development Commission, which has been established for some time, has the right to take similar action which respect to land within and close to the boundaries of Monarto. The long-established South Australian Housing Trust also has the right and authority to buy land, subdivide and develop it, and to build houses for lease, rent, or sale. This evening we are creating another authority, called the South Australian Teacher Housing Authority, which has the power to do all the things that these other authorities have power to do. Will this authority be able to create more housing accommodation in South Australia? If it can do that, I should like to know how. Also I should like to know why the Housing Trust has not been able to provide accommodation for teachers throughout the State. Is it lack of expertise? Is it lack of tradesmen?

Mr. Goldsworthy: It's a lack of money.

Mr. EVANS: My colleague suggests that it is a lack of money. If it is, are we to create another authority that will use some of the money available for these purposes? It has been suggested that the authority will be able to borrow money. Should we be giving the trust the chance to borrow this money? Should we be giving the trust the chance to borrow more money than it can obtain at present? We will have several groups competing to acquire land for houses. I am convinced that teachers in country areas have had inadequate and unsatisfactory housing for many years, especially when it is considered that not many years ago teachers were paid a low salary and teaching was not a highly paid profession. However, that aspect of discontent has gone, and the teaching profession is now one of the highest paid professions in the community.

We appreciate that situation, but it does not help those who have to lead a nomadic life while serving in country areas. I believe it is possible, if we desire it, for the Housing Trust to upgrade its country housing activities in order to provide accommodation for the teachers concerned. I am concerned that all we will do here is end up with another subsidised group, but not in country areas. I would not object to such a situation in country areas, because I think some form of rent concession should be provided for those who serve in the more distant areas of this State. However, under the provisions of this Bill the authority can buy land in metropolitan Adelaide or in major towns: it can subdivide it and develop any form of housing for teachers. It can provide housing in the metropolitan area of Adelaide, and charge rentals for it similar to rents charged in Western Australia of $12 a week. The member for Kavel said that a rent of $35 a week was needed to make the Western Australian proposition viable. This concession is being given to, a highly paid profession, and could apply to metropolitan Adelaide.

Mr. Goldsworthy: They're all Government employees.

Mr. EVANS: They are not all Government employees: many tradesmen in the Government's service are not highly paid and have to borrow money at nothing less than 10 per cent for a house and land that will cost about $24 000. For a more satisfactory house the cost is about $30 000 and, at 10 per cent interest, the repayments are $60 a week. That is what tradesmen and other professions in the community have to face, but we are giving this authority the power to develop teacher housing in the metropolitan area. If the authority's duties were to take care of the real cause of disquiet and discontent in country areas, I would not be so concerned. However, I am concerned, because I believe that this authority will not be a viable proposition. I reiterate that I do not object to a subsidy for housing in country areas but, if this authority builds houses in the metropolitan area and makes other taxpayers subsidise a highly paid profession, that is wrong.

I issue that warning so that in future we can look back and say that we were conscious of this matter. We all know that the teaching profession constitutes one of the most emotional areas in the community, and it can apply pressure on Governments and Parliamentarians to a much greater extent than can other professions in the community. In some States that pressure has been applied in the past. We all know that, if the opportunity exists in the future and if the wrong people are in the right place at the right time, the same things will happen again.

When there was talk of a Teacher Housing Authority, I supported it fully in that context, because I believed that it would serve country areas. I thought it was necessary, but I thought the Housing Trust could have been structured to take suitable action, or at least that the Land Commission

could have been used if we wished to go as far as that. However, we have another authority under way. If houses are built in small country towns, their capital value will not be as high as the cost of building them because they will have little resale value. That is why private enterprise has not built houses of a reasonable standard to help members of the teaching profession.

It is unsatisfactory for country teachers to have to board with families, and it is the responsibility of our society to provide individual accommodation for those teachers; that is reasonable. If we are to provide home-units or flats in country areas, the cost will be about $15 000 a unit, requiring a rental of about $20 a week. The lowest paid teachers receive salaries of more than $5 000 a year, and the rental would be about one-fifth of the salary, which is not unreasonable. What we will have now, however, is another authority to compete for the money available.

The member for Kavel mentioned the activities of the Victorian authority, which he said gets by on an average rental of $13 a week for a flat, a unit, or a house. However, he is speaking of money made available at a very low interest rate. There is no way in the world in which this or any similar authority could make a go of it on rentals of $13. The rental must be at least $23 or $24 a week to make the proposition viable. If any member wishes to carry out the exercise, he will find that that is the case. It would be a courageous politician who voted against a measure such as this when we are providing houses for a profession whose members bring pressure to bear. This applies not to all members of the profession but to those who are inclined to bring about pressures and use emotional and other factors to push home their arguments. I am not going to oppose the Bill, but I am disappointed. In the main, my colleagues believe this is a good and sensible step. If it would help country areas, [would have no doubts about it at all, but I see a dark shadow.

As the teaching profession wishes to bring pressure to bear on political Parties or Governments of the future, we will be providing within the metropolitan area of Adelaide houses at the lowest conceivable rentals, the sort of rentals pensioners and others are charged. Some teachers will be fighting for such rentals in the metropolitan area while their colleagues are attempting to buy houses, paying high interest rates, perhaps in the same suburb or even in the same street. We will bring about discontent. If the action is to apply only in country areas or in areas of real shortage and inconvenience (and that could be at Christies Beach, or somewhere else; I do not deny that), I think it will be an excellent exercise, but I see in the long term an inherent danger that many future Parliaments will regret. The rest of society will pay the bill. A significant part of the profession will accept responsibility, and those people will buy their own houses within the metropolitan area, but others will not do that. I shall await the outcome of the authority's activities, and I shall be interested to see how it will compete for money against all the other authorities in the State whose business it is to develop land and build houses.

Mr. ARNOLD (Chaffey): I support the Bill, which is one of the better moves made by the Government in recent years. However, I, too, ask why the South Australian Housing Trust has not been able effectively to carry out this work. The shortage of housing is one of the greatest problems facing the education system in South Australia, especially in country areas. I suppose more examples of this problem have been referred by members to the Minister, than have any other problems affecting their districts. I wonder why the Housing Trust has failed and why it has not been able to carry out this work. As the member for Fisher has said, the money still has to be provided. The authority is to have an initial allocation of $500 000, but it is one more authority to carry out work in the same area as the Housing Trust. At its peak, the Housing Trust produced 4 000 units a year, but today it is producing only half that number. Perhaps the Minister can explain what has gone wrong and how a new authority such as this will solve the problem.

It would appear that the authorities established in Western Australia in 1965 and in Victoria in 1970 are doing the job in those States. As an example of the concern of the parents in South Australia, I shall read extracts from two letters I have received recently. One was from the Secretary of the Glossop High School, and the other was from a parent writing to the high school council on this subject. The letters were written before the Government announced any move in relation to teacher housing. The letter from the Secretary of the Glossop High School states:

This council, school administrative staff, teachers generally, and, we believe, a number of local interested persons, are very concerned about the apparent failure of the Education Department to take positive action to alleviate the staff housing shortage. Constant effort by this council and the Principal of the school, in particular, has proved fruitless. Many houses for sale have been inspected but rejected as not meeting P.B.D. standards.

The present departmental policy is to buy (not build), or to act as tenant at large for suitable flats. The problem of shortage of suitable housing has affected the high school and we are concerned that, if allowed to continue, the problem can only result in rapid turnover of staff, which is most undesirable, particularly when we consider the fact that new staff require an adequate induction period when commencing work at a school new to them.

The following letter is from a concerned parent involved at the same school who wrote to the school council as follows:

As a parent, I am concerned at the serious lack of accommodation provided by the Education Department for its teachers in this district. This subject was mentioned at our parents and friends meetings last year and I wish to know if the school council is doing anything to have the matter rectified. At no time can I recall being advised by any other Government department, for example, Lands, Police, Railways, banks, etc., that, if we, as clients, didn't assist in accommodation for their staff, services from these departments would have to be curtailed.

As a taxpayer, I am not at all impressed with the political gimmicks of any Government in providing large grants to the Education Department for aids and equipment. What is the sense in having the most modern, best equipped school in the State, if there are no teachers to staff the school? I want my children taught by human beings who are well trained and happy in their work and with their living conditions. All the aids and equipment in the country will not take the place of a good teacher.

Both those letters from concerned parents were written before the Government introduced this Bill: they were not prompted by the measure, and they express the genuine concern of parents throughout South Australia. If the Bill, by establishing the authority, improves the situation, it will be all to the good. I hope that as a result of implementing this Bill a considerable improvement in teaching housing in South Australia will ensue. I support the Bill.

Mr. GUNN (Eyre): I will be brief, as I understand that other matters are to be discussed this evening. This Bill has my wholehearted support and, as one who represents a district containing more than 30 schools, I know how much of a problem teacher housing can be. I support the comment of the member for Chaffey that there is no

point in having excellent schools with excellent teaching aids if there is not proper accommodation to house teachers. I have been most fortunate that in certain parts of my district new housing has been provided for teachers, especially at Coober Pedy, where a new residence has been provided for the Headmaster. The Deputy Headmaster uses dug-out accommodation, and this is quite satisfactory: it is the best type of accommodation for people in this area.

Mr. Venning: The Government has not always been interested in providing accommodation.

Mr. GUNN: I will leave that for the honourable member to discuss privately with the Minister. Single-unit teacher accommodation has been built for the Government by Atco, and I believe that this scheme should be expanded greatly in the future. The member for Kavel correctly pointed out that single teachers are no longer willing to board with families. I do not believe that has ever been a suitable accommodation system for teachers who, after teaching during the day, are then involved with students after hours. I do not believe that set of circumstances is satisfactory. The Bill has my wholehearted support, and I am pleased to see that the Minister is following the progressive lead of Liberal Governments in other States. It is only a pity that he and his colleagues have not done this more often, but I am pleased to see the Minister following the lead initiated by the Brand Government in Western Australia. What rentals will teachers be charged by the new authority? Will the same basis as that used so successfully by the Housing Trust apply? In Ceduna the trust charges a specific rental for its accommodation.

In many cases teacher accommodation would be better than normal trust accommodation, although I am not criticising the trust, which is probably the best housing authority in Australia. Will the authority use the expertise of the trust in its programme? This is an important aspect, because it would be foolish if the knowledge of the trust were not fully utilised. I hope that as a result of establishing the authority there will be a great improvement in teacher accommodation throughout South Australia. This is one matter that concerns all country members, as we are continually approached by school councils and headmasters regarding this problem, and I hope that we will see an increase in the number of houses built.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Education): 1 appreciate the assistance received from members in relation to this matter. One of the main reasons that persuaded me to establish this authority was the fact that an additional $500 000 a year would be available for teacher housing without detracting in any way whatever from any other part of the Government's Loan programme. The Government can continue to put the $750 000 a year that it had from the school-building programme into teacher housing, and allow the authority independently to borrow $500 000, thereby avoiding the provisions of the Financial Agreement. The effect will be to give at least a $500 000 a year boost to the amount available for teacher housing.

I point out to the member for Kavel that clause 15 is worded in such a way as to require the Minister to transfer to the authority all his interest in any land. An interest in land covers not only the holding of land but also the existence of a house on that land. Therefore, that clause effectively produces the same kind of result as that to which the honourable member referred as applying in Victoria. Regarding viability, I point out that all Government employees occupying Government houses have a 20 per cent rental subsidy built into the rental that they pay in South Australia. Consequently, that will be an element affecting viability. All teachers and all other Government employees, apart from the police who I think have their accommodation provided rent free, have this subsidy built in.

Regarding the Education Department, we have just extended (by becoming the tenant-at-large) that 20 per cent subsidy to teachers who occupy Housing Trust accommodation. By becoming the tenant-at-large (and the authority will take over that function), it is possible to vary the arrangements made for teacher tenants from those that formerly applied to trust tenants. There are several things we would like to do for teachers that the trust is not willing to do across the board. The tenant-at-large arrangement, whether through the Minister of Education or through the authority, will relieve that problem. Therefore, as a basic fact, a subsidy will be built into the overall arrangements that currently exist, and that will affect the viability of the authority.

The next point to which I must refer is that we have taken the decision to eliminate the bond in South Australia. We no longer have the bond as a weapon to induce teachers to go to country areas. Obviously, incentives may be necessary to replace the role previously played by the bond. When the bond is completely eliminated it will save the State, at current student allowance rates, between $3 000 000 and $4 000 000 annually. If as a consequence of establishing the authority, that saving is replaced by a subsidy of a significantly lesser amount in order to provide an incentive for teachers to teach in the country areas—

Dr. Eastick: Can you hold them to a lesser amount, though?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The current incentive subsidy is about $150 000 or $160 000. It will grow above that, but there is no prospect that it will grow to anything like the saving we will make by eliminating the bond. If the bond is to be eliminated, we must have incentives.

Mr. Nankivell: How does that save $4 000 000 for the Government?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Because, by eliminating the bond and providing an unbonded scholarship of $600 for all those attending colleges of advanced education, all remaining students will get allowances through the Australian Government, and the State will be saved a substantial sum. All students who do university courses do not receive any payment from the State Education Department until they graduate. Until then they are supported by the Australian Government, whereas previously we were paying about $1 300 or $1 400 to each student. Students at teachers colleges receive a $600 unbonded scholarship. That enables them to remain eligible for the Commonwealth tertiary living allowance. That is where the saving is. This enabled the bond to be eliminated, which in turn enabled this scheme to be introduced. I believe the authority will be successful and that it will lead over a period to a solution of the problem in country areas. Over the past few years single teachers have switched away from boarding with families and now wish to have accommodation. To satisfy that demand would require milions of dollars in a short time. Under current arrangements one cannot provide that sort of arrangement without wrecking the school-building programme.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses I to 7 passed.

Clause 8—"Allowances and expenses."

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I move:

In subclause (1) to strike out "determined by the Governor" and insert "prescribed".

I canvassed this matter in the second reading debate. Unless there is a good reason for the Governor to determine allowances, I believe they should come under the scrutiny of Parliament.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Education): I cannot accept the amendment. The general procedure now in all these positions approved by Parliament in the past is that allowances for members of various Government boards and trusts are determined by the Governor. The Government has adopted a general policy that such allowances are determined on the advice of the Public Service Board, and a distinction is drawn between members of an authority who are outside Government employment, members of an authority who are in Government employment but the authority membership is outside their immediate area of expertise, and membership of an authority by a Government public servant where the membership is part of his ordinary expertise. If a member of this authority is a member of the Education Department and part of his normal duties is that he should be a member of the authority, and the work is done during his normal course of duties, he would not be paid any allowance. He would receive expenses for travelling and for other matters. Allowances paid vary at present according to who is the member of the authority concerned and whence he comes. These allowances are determined under general rules established by the Public Service Board and accepted by Cabinet.

The other aspect of the matter is that, in a period of inflation, we have to adjust fees and allowances paid to members of the various Government authorities much more frequently, and if we did it by regulation it would become much more cumbersome. In order to give flexibility where a public servant is a member of an authority and where such membership is part of his normal duties he does not earn any greater sum as a consequence. That is why I want the provision to remain: it is consistent with general Government policy on the matter.

Amendment negatived; clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 12 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Education) moved:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. OLSON (Semaphore): I wish to record my appreciation to the Government and to congratulate it for amending Standing Orders to allow a regular debate of this kind. I am sure it will help to effectively deal with the problems raised by constituents. I draw the attention of the House to a problem that must be shared by all members of Parliament, especially by Labor members whose districts are in the outer metropolitan and city areas. I refer to the exploitation of tenants by some landlords and to the rackets associated with the letting of houses. Every second person who comes into my district office is trying to find some sort of accommodation, mainly rental housing, because they cannot afford to buy a house. These people do not want to live in flats for the obvious reason that they have difficulty in obtaining sufficient space in which their children can play. They object especially to cluster-type flats where the walls are so thin that they have a minimum amount of privacy.

Rents being charged are usually about $24 to $34 a week. For a five-room furnished house, the rent required is usually $50 a week. I do not believe for a moment that, if a flat is of solid construction and provides reasonable accommodation, $50 a week is excessive. However, most of the flats for which rents of $24 to $34 are being charged are substandard.

I can give an example in relation to a chain store in this State, which, incidentally, holds itself out to be a benefactor of charitable organisations. The example relates to an invalid pensioner and his wife who receive $59.50 a week. In addition to the pension the husband receives $5 a week allowance for their two boys and one girl, who are teenagers. These people are required to pay about $30 a week in rent. The rent was $17 a week in August. It was increased to $24 in September, and then was increased to the present rental.

The walls of the flat are damp, the roof leaks, and the wife has to wash clothes in the bath, because that is the only laundry facility available. These people, in addition to paying the rent, must try to provide for the other requirements of the family, including clothes, food, light and power, fares, and medical benefits. They cannot do this on the remainder of their pension, and all this is leading to great hardship for this family.

The plight of elderly and single people on fixed incomes has been affected grossly and most of them find that, if they complain about the rent being charged, or even if the matter is referred to the South Australian Housing Trust on a fair rents basis, they receive an eviction order to vacate the premises.

Mr. Evans: They can't be removed.

Mr. OLSON: They can be removed, make no mistake about that. If there is no lease and the people are paying rent on a weekly basis, that is the only notice that needs to be given to a tenant to get him out. The fact that Australia is a nation of many owner-occupiers should not blind this Parliament or this community to the increasing incidence of rackets involving landlords and their tenants. There has been clear evidence in recent weeks that those in our community who are obliged to rent accommodation are becoming victims of exploitation.

In most cases, the racket to which I have referred is carried out in the way I will explain. When a prospective tenant goes along, the owner says, "Well, the place needs to be painted." Because of the demand for accommodation, he says to the tenant, "I will provide the paint so that you can improve the quality of the place." Subsequently, the landlord finds that the place has been improved as a result of the painting that has been done in the tenant's spare time, and he then has the audacity to increase the rent.

Mr. Evans: Whose fault is it that there is a housing shortage?

Mr. OLSON: Do not worry about that. The Australian Government has provided twice the sum—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Semaphore.

Mr. OLSON: Another example is that the tenants of a two-storey dwelling, almost 100 years old, did not even have running water in the kitchen: the tap was outside. With the landlord's permission, they arranged to have the plumbing improved by installing a hot-water system at their own expense. The next thing the tenants knew was that the building had been sold. The new landlord then came to inspect the place. As the tenants had, at their own expense, affixed panelling to the walls

because of the amount of salt damp that was penetrating them, he increased the rent from $24 to $40. Because the tenants could not afford to pay $40, they had to seek other accommodation. In circumstances where it can be proved that tenants have spent money on rental accommodation, some form of compensation should be available to them.

THE SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. RUSSACK (Gouger): I bring forward a matter which I consider most important and which could have assisted a town in the district I represent if the Government had seen fit to give financial assistance to a small industry that had to close in the early part of this year, as a result of which 14 employees were stood down. An industry was set up to process the old tailings of the Wallaroo Mines that remained after the mines closed in 1923. About two years ago, a firm that had engaged in this processing work closed down because of the depressed price of copper. A syndicate of three men, comprising a metallurgist, a mining engineer and an analyst, invested $150 000 in this private enterprise and worked the tailings for 12 months, during which time the price of copper gradually increased until on the London market it reached about $2 200 a tonne.

Because of a ruling in Australia, no more than $1 450 a tonne was allowed to be paid to industries such as the one at Wallaroo Mines; this was acceptable because the break-even price to keep the business viable was $1 100 a tonne. So this involved its accepting the ceiling price, thinking that there would be a minimum price, but the price on the world market fell below $1 450 a tonne to $950 a tonne, as a result of which the company was running at a loss. Last Christmas, it was necessary to ask the employees to take their leave.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: They took a punt on it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. RUSSACK: The employees took their leave and the firm took them back for a week hoping that the price would rise. In the meantime, an approach was made to the Minister of Development and Mines for help. I thank the Minister for receiving the deputation and for considering the suggestions made by the administrators of this enterprise that a subsidy should be given on some services provided by Government and semi-government instrumentalities. The. request was made in relation to electricity and water supplies. Unfortunately, however, it was not possible for financial assistance to be given. The enterprise therefore closed, and 14 men in the Kadina-Wallaroo-Moonta district were thrown out of work; 14 men in that district could mean, by comparison, 300 men in the city area. It meant a lot to the district.

This matter confuses me; I cannot understand it. Former Governments and the present Government have said, "If you want industry in the country, let us know what your natural resources are. You get something going, and we will assist it. We cannot set up an industry in your area, however, because if we do so there we will have to do it in another district." Yet here is an industry employing 14 men and three executive staff which has had to cease operating and employing people because it could not obtain financial assistance. Surely, if the Government could not see its way clear to help this organisation in the way it requested, some suggestion could have been made (especially considering the millions of dollars that are being channelled through the Regional Employment Development scheme) so that these men to whom I have referred could have retained their employment in the Kadina-Wallaroo-Moonta area, of which the Government says it takes notice and tries to help.

I refer now to a certain gentleman in New South Wales who must have caused the South Australian Labor Government to blush many times. I refer to Mr. Wran, the Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales. I hope that we will soon see legislation introduced into this Parliament that will relieve people of the burden of succession duties. This tax is iniquitous because of its severity. Widows and those who have been deprived of their breadwinner must go through a traumatic experience to try to make ends meet, even to the point of disposing of assets. I will now refer to a press report that I read recently. Although I realise it could be said that this matter was not reported correctly, I think it was reported correctly, as Mr. Wran's statements are shown in the report in inverted commas. The report, headed "Plan to abolish death duties", states:

Widows will not pay death duties on their husbands' estates in New South Wales under a policy adopted by the Labor Party. The New South Wales Opposition Leader, Mr. Wran, announced here that the State A.L.P. was now committed to the principle of abolishing the requirement that widows pay death duties on their husbands' estates. "When the Labor Party takes office in New South Wales at the next elections—

which it will not—

we will relieve widows of the unfair and harsh burden of these duties which are now levied," Mr. Wran said.

The move would be the first step by a Labor Government in New South Wales to abolish all death duties. Details of how it should be applied are now being worked out by a subcommittee of the New South Wales Parliamentary Labor Party.

Mr. Wran said, "The injustice of the law which compels a husband and wife to both pay death duties on the same property is bad enough. But the injustice to widows, who are often without any other means than what their husbands leave them, has long ago become an intolerable burden."

The average married woman contributed to the accumulation of the family home and assets. It therefore seemed wrong that she should be treated virtually as a stranger when it came to the payment of death duties on her husband's estate.

"Most of those affected are in the middle or modest income bracket," he said. "The really rich engage lawyers and accountants to arrange their affairs so they pay as little as possible."

I hope that the policy that has been adopted by the Labor Party in New South Wales will become the policy of the Labor Government in South Australia. Let us return to the time when the domestic home was a separate entity for succession duties purposes, and when an insurance policy taken out in the husband's or breadwinner's name could be reverted so that it was a separate entity, and we would then be in a more reasonable situation concerning succession duties. I hope Government members will note what their counterpart in New South Wales have done, and that soon we will see amendments introduced that will alleviate the effects of this iniquitous succession duties tax.

Mr. PAYNE (Mitchell): I draw the attention of the House to a question of lack of progress concerning a proposal that no-one today, to my knowledge, has really opposed. I refer to a proposal to make a walk-in nature reserve of the part of the Sturt River between Sturt Road, Mitchell Park, and South Road, Bedford Park. Members will know that this part of the river is one of its last sections in the metropoltan area, and it has remained almost in its natural state, except for the northern end alongside Sturt Road, at which it would be possible to adopt the idea that I have quickly outlined. I must confess that I did not originate this idea, but it came to my notice early in 1972

when Mr. Deane Ross (who lives in that area, is connected with Ross's Rose Nurseries, and is also one of my constituents) pointed out to me in a letter that he thought everyone would realise that the remainder of the Sturt River towards the sea from that area now consisted of a concrete drain. He suggested that there was every chance that in future someone would want to make a concrete drain out of the part to which I have referred. He opposed this suggestion, and thought that what should be done for the benefit of people now, and for the benefit of those who come after us, was to retain a part of the natural environment so close to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Coumbe: What did he think about the flood control dam?

Mr. PAYNE: Mr. Ross said that this area was now the closest part of the river in its natural state that remained near the suburbs, and was one of the few sections still available to the public. It has been a popular area for children and adults, because it is a well-known site and is easily accessible from main roads and by public transport. I congratulate Mr. Ross, who shows a nice turn of phrase and an economy of words in putting over an idea. Perhaps we in this place could learn from him.

Mr. Coumbe: I prefer the Torrens River.

Mr. PAYNE: Each member can have his own grievance. However, Mr. Ross's idea was that the area should be sympathetically cleared of foreign vegetation and replanted with trees, shrubs, and grasses to return it to its original character. I understand that Mr. Lothian has been approached and that he is interested and excited about the idea, which he thinks has considerable merit. I have brought the matter to the attention of the Minister of Education, because he is involved. I have raised it with the member for Mawson, who is also the Minister of Development and Mines; with the Deputy Premier, because he has been involved on the drainage side as Minister of Works; and with the Minister of Transport and of Local Government, who is closely associated with the river, being connected with the south-western drainage scheme. I have also brought it to the attention of the Minister of Environment and Conservation, who has indicated his interest in the proposal. Like me, he wishes to see it advanced.

As I understand it, the problem relates to the land involved. Mr. Ross's suggestion was that a certain area of land on each side of the river should be declared a walk-in reserve, and the various features I have mentioned to make it a pleasant place and to keep it as natural as possible need land. The Sturt College of Advanced Education is involved, as is the Flinders University. There is some kind of complex land division which needs to be thrashed out so that the university and the college have land for playing fields. Although I have no quarrel with that, that is part of the problem. I understand the Marion council is involved and that there may need to be a cross-transfer of land. What bugs me, however, is that no progress is being made in the matter even though, as far as I can find out, no-one is against it.

Mr. Coumbe: But you have been in touch with all those Ministers.

Mr. PAYNE: Certainly I have, and all of them have made some progress. In my opinion, this idea is important, representing an acquisition for the people of this State which otherwise could be lost. There is not much of the river left with which anything can be done except to put a few trees alongside the concrete drain. Although the honourable member opposite is not exactly needling me, I ask him not to try to help me. I do not think I need any help. I have the idea clearly in my mind and I would like to bring it to the attention of the House. I regard the proposition seriously. There is little aggrandisement in it for me, but I am anxious to see it brought about for the benefit of the people of South Australia and for people living in that area. Any kind of reserve or playing ground would be more than welcome to the people of Mitchell Park. It is a closely settled area, mainly of Housing Trust houses, and this could be an excellent walk-in reserve for the youngsters.

Some of the fears of the residents and of Mr. Ross regarding the ponding basin were not realised, because it did not disfigure the area as much as had been feared. The departments concerned and the Ministers concerned were approached, and help was given. Special measures were taken to save large river gums that otherwise may have been lost. This is not a shot at the Ministers, and I do not need any help from members opposite.

Mr. Coumbe: Can't you take it to Caucus?

Mr. PAYNE: If it were necessary, but that is a matter for our Party. The honourable member can solve the problems on his side within his own Party, and we can handle our own problems on our own side.

Mr. Coumbe: You were going all right for a while.

Mr. PAYNE: Let it go on record that I requested a meeting on site and all the Ministers I have named took the time from their many and varied duties to attend and look at the proposition. That includes the member for Mawson, before he was a Minister, who was also interested in this project. Perhaps that will explain what this is all about. I am referring to something that I believe should be done. As I have said, no-one appears to be opposing it.

Mr. Coumbe: How far have you got?

Mr. PAYNE: I have got to the stage where no-one is opposing it. The honourable member has been in Parliament long enough to know that that is an achievement. I have not heard of anyone who wants to oppose it. Obviously I have achieved my purpose: I have brought this matter to the attention of Parliament, and considerable interest has been aroused on the Opposition benches, which I find especially interesting and somewhat unusual so late in the evening. I appreciate the special interest that members opposite have shown in my topic, and I thank the Government for the opportunity it has given Government members to bring such matters as this before the House.

Motion carried.

At 10.26 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, March 12, at 2 p.m.